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SEPTEMBER 1991 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

Paul Johnson: JFK, Sinner • Daniel Wattenberg: P.J., Winner

John Sununu's Foolish Pride
by Brit Hume

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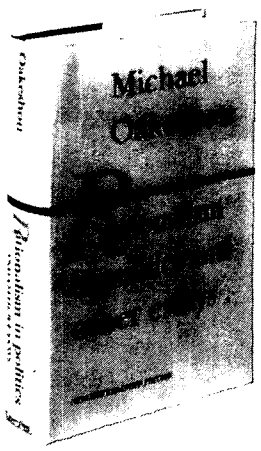

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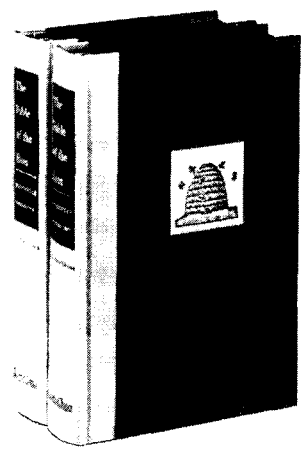

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Loan Guarantees for Settlement of Soviet Jews

Should the U.S. Play a Role in this Humanitarian Enterprise?

Only a few months ago, the world was able to watch the thrilling spectacle of the airlift of 15,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel. But the rescue of the Ethiopians, heartening and important though it is, is really only a "sideshow" in the ongoing saga of this ingathering. The greatest challenge facing the Jewish state today, almost even more daunting than the implacable hostility surrounding Israel and the ever-present military challenge, is the ingathering of the Soviet Jews.

What are the facts?

■ For years it had been one of the great policy objectives of the United States vis-a-vis the Soviet Union to allow the free emigration of its citizens. Of all the nationalities in the Soviet Union, the Jews are by far the most endangered and the most anxious to leave the country. Finally, the gates have begun to open – a little slowly at first, but then wider and wider. Under U.S. immigration laws, only a small number of these Soviet fugitives are able to come to our country. The vast majority plan on settling in Israel. And that is as it should be. Because the state of Israel has one single purpose: the ingathering of Jews, especially those that are persecuted and who are in need, from all corners of the world. And it doesn't make any difference, of course, whether they are "Europeans" or whether they come from the Arab countries, from Asia or, as now in the case of the Ethiopian Jews, whether they are black Africans.

■ So far, about 300,000 Soviet Jews have arrived in Israel. A total of about 1 million are expected within the next three years. Since the population of Israel is about 5 million, that is equivalent to the United States having to absorb about 45 million new immigrants – more than the population of the states of California and New York combined – and that within a 3-year period! And the United States is a rich country and an immensely large one. Israel is a poor country. Its per capita income is less than $10,000 per year and more than one-half of the country's budget is dedicated to defense. And it's small: the size of the country is one-half that of San Bernardino County in California. The Soviet immigrants come virtually penniless, because they may not take more than $100 out of the country. There are no ready jobs, and there is no ready housing. It is a daunting and almost overwhelming task to absorb these people. It is estimated that it will ultimately cost more than $50 billion.

■ But Israel is determined to overcome this challenge, to build the 260,000 new housing units that will be needed, to build the 12,000 new classrooms, to create the 360,000 new jobs, and to integrate the 1 million Soviet Jews into Israeli life, just as it has done with over 1 million previous immigrants. Israel and world Jewry will carry virtually all of the cost of this absorption and will create the massive additional infrastructure needed to sustain a population increase of over 20% in just two or three short years. In this fiscal year alone, more than $6 billion or 20% of Israel's budget will go toward absorption of immigrants. The American Jewish community will have raised more than $4 billion and has agreed to co-sign a further $900 million guarantee to help with these costs.

■ There is one urgent matter, however, in which the assistance of the United States will be needed. Israel will ask the United States to *guarantee* (not to grant, not even to lend) $10 billion for housing, funds that will be needed, in $2 billion yearly installments, over a 5-year period. This is a financial transaction that is virtually without risk and at virtually no cost to the United States. In contrast to many of the developing countries, Israel has never defaulted on a loan and has never asked for "forgiveness" of any indebtedness. It has a perfect payment record. American guarantees of this $10 billion loan are absolutely required in order to make the orderly absorption of Soviet Jews into Israel possible.

The matter of the loan guarantees will be before Congress almost immediately. The United States, a country of immigrants just like Israel, has tremendous moral responsibility in this matter. As with all other financial assistance to Israel, the funds under this guarantee will be used only within Israel's 1967 borders. No funds will be used to settle Jews in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"). But the United States must focus on the humanitarian nature of this enterprise. It must not be "linked" and must not be conditioned upon any political issues, such as the procedural questions of the peace process, the question of settlements in the administered areas, or any other "concessions". Israel, like the United States, is a beacon of liberty and of hope. The United States should approve the $10 billion loan guarantee to Israel – its best friend and staunchest ally in the world – and should assist, virtually without risk and expense to itself, in one of the greatest liberation movements of our times: the exodus of 1 million Soviet Jews and their orderly absorption in Israel.

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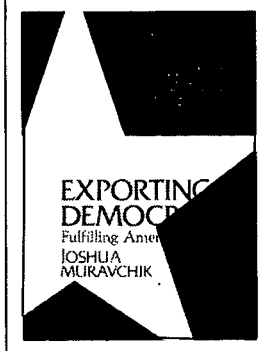

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• As one of the hottest Julys on record evaporated, yells of help went up from the sweating, heaving prophets of global warming. Yet have they noticed that 73.3 percent of the American people cool themselves with small air-conditioning units that leave them perfectly comfortable and without complaint, no matter the heat and humidity? Now, if only the Congress could be prevailed upon, perhaps by the Union of Concerned Scientists or some equally progressive group, to appropriate funding for one vast federally directed air-conditioner, it could cool the entire country and perhaps even the world. Then who could worry about global warming or the ozone layer? It is time that progressives place at the top of the national agenda the need for a federal Department of Air-Conditioning, which could build on the wonders wrought by the Department of Education.

• Scandal and shame continue to haunt Stanford University, where the eleven-year-old junta of President Donald (no middle initial) Kennedy is fighting for its life, and the presidential yacht is under 24-hour surveillance, lest he slip away to Cuba or some other sanctuary. The government has slashed more than $18 million from Stanford's annual research budget, owing to irregularities in its accounting procedures—that presidential yacht being a particularly dubious expense. Now the campus is besieged by charges of sexism at the highest level, and some of it is pretty horrible stuff, like using pictures of naked women in anatomy classes (nudal frontity!), and in the operating room of the medical school it is alleged that some profs have referred to their colleagues—even the women—as "honey." One med student, the comely and nubile Miss Julie Seavello, reports that in one class an inflatable doll was used to illustrate "respiratory ventilation." She objected, stomping her little foot, only to receive the sex-crazed response, "You're entitled to your opinion, but I do not see the problem." Moreover, many lady med students complain, according to the *New York Times*, "about professors addressing students as if they were all men, despite the fact that 50 percent of the first-year class is female," and wonderfully callipygian. The very pretty Miss Julie Switzer reports that she had to sit through a lecture during which a prof displayed a computer printout of his wife's uterine contractions and yawped, "You may never feel any of this, but your wife will." "I thought," exclaimed Miss Switzer, who is very cute when she is mad, "'Who are you talking to?'" Miss Switzer's uterus is one of her proudest possessions, and it is to be hoped that it will not go unnoticed during future lectures. Rumor has it that more shocking revelations lie ahead, and wait until it is discovered that apparently all the women at the Stanford Medical School are named Julie.

• Liberals became vexed when it was revealed that President George Herbert Walker Bush's nominee to replace Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall is a strong proponent of natural law. Justice Marshall was a celebrated champion of unnatural law. Led by Sen. Edward Kennedy, Democrats on the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources rejected the nomination of Miss Carol Iannone to the National Council on the Humanities, prompting the devilish *Wall Street Journal* to title its editorial "Senator Kennedy Gets His Woman." The only complete version of Colombia's new constitution was lost in a computer accident in Bogota. "Perhaps only in Colombia could such a historic event be endangered by something like this. It is a very special country," lamented a distraught member of the Colombian assembly, who is obviously unfamiliar with the United States during the Carter Administration.

• From Lagos, Nigeria, comes word that an unidentified disease killed 600 people in six days, prompting thousands to flee. And in America there has been an outbreak of Biden Virus, the strange disease afflicting ever larger numbers of journalists and causing them to act like a certain United States senator, whom charity admonishes us not to identify. In the first two weeks of July, five prominent members of the media were struck down, leaving researchers to speculate that hundreds of cases may have gone unreported out in Podunk. The *Washington Post*'s Miss Laura Parker was fired for lifting material from the *Miami Herald* for an article on mosquitoes. An unnamed *Boston Globe* reporter was disciplined for bidenizing from Mr. Julian Bond. But in the most contagious case, it was discovered that the *New York Times*'s Mr. Fox Butterfield bidenized from the *Boston Globe*'s report that the dean of the Boston University journalism school had himself bidenized significant portions of his commencement address from an essay by the movie critic Mr. Michael Medved, who himself appears to be uninfected. Finally, the Walter Lippmann of our time has been afflicted by something very close to the Biden Virus. On July 1, Mr. Phil Donahue admitted that, in a syndicated dithyramb to a deceased nun, he faked her name and the handwritten note that appeared in his piece and was supposed to be by her. "I really don't think I deceived anyone," the patient said to the *Washington Post*'s Mr. Howard Kurtz in a telephone interview.

• On July 2, the leaders of the Warsaw Pact dissolved the 36-year-old alliance without incident. A block of frozen urine fell from the sky over Babylon, Long Island, landing on a parked car and looking to the connoisseur like a huge Lemon Slush. In East St. Louis, Illinois, a highly competitive Little League baseball coach was jailed for firing his .38-caliber revolver at a 16-year-old umpire who had, perhaps injudiciously, called one of the coach's nine-year-old players out at home plate. Wimbledon was won by two Germans, Miss Steffi Graf and Mr. Michael Stich. Six parakeets, recruited to serve on the HMS *Manchester* during the One Hundred Hours War, received citations for bravery from Prime Minister John Major's increasingly wet government. In Poland, nudists have banded together in a new political party, the Erotic Party, which will oppose "regressive moral ideas," to say nothing of mosquitoes, chiggers, and poison sumac.

• On July 11, President Bush reappointed Mr. Alan Greenspan as Federal Reserve chairman, and the next day the Hon. David Bonior was elected majority whip, to replace the controversial Rep. William Gray in September. Mr. Charles W. Shinabarger of Woodson Terrace, Missouri, joined the lengthening list of American prisoners of conscience when he was sentenced to five days in jail for sending excrement and a rude note with a traffic fine in Webster City, Iowa. In progressive Yaounde, Cameroon, Mr. Abel Biyaga went on trial for falsifying the state of his health and presenting himself as a corpse during an anti-government rally in the port city of Doula. Also facing charges is Mr. Abel Massock, an opposition leader who pushed the cart. Somewhat reminiscent of the female student body at Stanford Medical School, the male citizens of Cameroon apparently all have the same first

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name, though most have much nicer dispositions.

• Under cover of darkness on July 17, the Senate raised its salaries by 23 percent. The shy, sensitive, intelligent Mr. Eddie Dewayne DeLuna of Bakersfield, California, has been sentenced to two years in the hoosegow for twisting the head off his girlfriend's three-week-old puppy and trying to flush it down a toilet after being told by the girlfriend to scram. G-7 leaders met in London and offered the Soviet Union's President Mikhail Gorbachev technical assistance in moving his economy forward into the eighteenth century. Later, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev announced their intention to sign the START treaty on July 30 in Moscow during a hastily called summit.

• An unforeseen danger from the otherwise socially useful condom was revealed by Mr. Onuoha Uguru, deceased. According to a Department of the Treasury press release, Mr. Uguru died whilst being examined for secreting heroin in condoms that he had swallowed just prior to boarding an airplane flight from his native Nigeria to the United States. An autopsy revealed approximately seventy heroin-filled condoms in Mr. Uguru's stomach. According to Treasury officials, condoms are frequently used to smuggle heroin into the country, which is against the law and has no place in a proper family-planning program. And congratulations to Mr. Ken Hedrick, who, upon finding that the Rev. Jesse Jackson had left his pocket money ($1,800) with some business cards and a folded handkerchief in the men's room at Memphis International Airport, handed the loot over to authorities. Poverty pays. *—RET*

CORRESPONDENCE

Web of Lies

The despicable attempt by John Sarich (Correspondence, *TAS*, July 1991) to defame the record of a great and patriotic man, General Draza Mihailovich, must be corrected. If you are going to deny the entire thesis of a scholarly work, you have an obligation to read it. Either Mr. Sarich has not taken the time to read David Martin's *The Web of Disinformation*, which he dismisses, or he has deliberately suppressed the documented facts which it contains. He thus exposes himself as either a fool or a liar.

I cannot do justice to Mr. Martin's stunning book in one letter, but I think a few details from it would suffice to obliterate Mr. Sarich's innuendo that Gen. Mihailovich was a Nazi collaborator and/or a non-fighter:

(1) On March 29, 1948, President Harry Truman, on the recommendation of General Dwight Eisenhower, awarded the Legion of Merit in the Degree of Chief Commander to Gen. Mihailovich in recognition of his services to the Allied cause, in particular to his rescue and return of *hundreds* of U.S. airmen who had been forced to bail out over territory controlled by his followers. But this award was not made public by the U.S. government until *1967* (after pressure from then-Congressman Edward Derwinski, now Secretary of Veterans' Affairs) for fear of offending that great fighter for freedom, Josip Broz Tito.

(2) On July 21, 1943, newspapers in occupied Yugoslavia ran quarter-page announcements, with photos, that the Nazis were offering 100,000 gold marks for the heads of Mihailovich or Tito. The BBC promptly announced that the Nazis were offering a reward for . . . just Tito.

(3) Mihailovich, unlike Tito, refused to flee his country, even after the Soviet Army had captured Belgrade. He was able to evade six whole divisions of Tito's troops for seventeen months, even after contracting typhus while on the run. The love he had earned among the peasants enabled him to be carried by stretcher from village to village without being caught. This love, of course, was what drove the Communists to murder him, which they finally did, after a typical Stalinoid trial, in July 1946.

Open your eyes, Mr. Sarich: read the book before you dismiss it, and try to take in what *Yugoslavian* historians are now saying about Mihailovich and Tito. I can sum it up for you: Mihailovich was a betrayed hero; and Tito was a murdering and corrupt despot.

—Philip Averbuck
Watertown, Massachusetts

Making Water

Ordinarily Tom Bethell's articles are factual and credible. His recent opus ("Watering The Chips," *TAS*, July 1991), on the other hand, leaves much to be desired. Bethell takes off to do a sales job for one Thomas Graff of the Environmental Defense Fund, who should be left to do his own selling, preferably in pages other than *TAS*. The problems described will not equitably be solved by the EDF; you may be certain that changes offered will succeed only in aggravating matters.

The present water distribution system is the result of years of development and, unless we are to avoid forgone disaster, must be left unmolested until something vastly superior comes along. A new plan would have to be acceptable to politicians, farmers, and others. To diddle with the present arrangement invites perilous prospects. We must bear in mind that California farmers (slyly castigated in the article) supply much of our food. Rice farmers alone produce a major portion of world demand. Fooling around with this system, to replace it with socialistic schemes, can only result in damage to production. Can Bethell seriously subscribe to such ideas?

Graff implies that, of all precipitation on California, about 63 percent evaporates. Where did he get that figure? I understand the evaporation rate is closer to one-third. If these numbers are incorrect, the validity of the entire article is suspect.

—Morris Guralnick
Orofino, Idaho

The Journalist's Creed

As I read Victor Gold's review (*TAS*, July 1991) of Bob Woodward's latest contribution to the Great Books series, I was reminded of an English verse, which seemed, properly amended, to fit the situation:

You cannot hope to bribe or twist
This upright Beltway journalist.
But seeing what the man will do
Unbribed, there's no occasion to.

—Marion C. Schneider
Tempe, Arizona

Go Eastland

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy Presswatch in general and Terry Eastland's analyses in particular.

With the "media" doing their best to revise our recollection of the last ten years or so, I'm glad I can depend on Presswatch to debunk and expose their abuse and tall tales.

—William M. Macfadyen
Santa Barbara, California

Cousin It

I know you're desperately concerned about "gender-based" language creeping into your magazine. Not to worry.

Right here in my new copy of that journal of record for the babbling elite left, the *New York Review*, is the answer; in a full-page ad for the personal computer program "Editor," it says the "SERIOUS WRITER" can "eliminate problems such as wordiness . . . and gender-based language." This particularly nonsensical blurb tweaked my curiosity and I tracked down the perpetrator to North Carolina State University. Guess now we know what they're smoking up in Raleigh, and it ain't grown

(continued on page 41)

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EDITORIALS

INTRODUCING CLARENCE THOMAS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Senator Metzenbaum, welcome to America. I think you are going to find that the country has changed quite a lot since you and your Liberal colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee locked yourselves away in that sublime fantasy chamber of yours. When was it that you last saw America as it is? November 4, 1980, when the electorate retired Jimmy Carter? Or did you stick around for the tax cuts, which Americans rather liked, and the 1984 reelection of Ronald Reagan? I know that by the 1988 presidential election you were lost to this world, for by then you were talking about America as though it were now and forever the Age of Aquarius and George Bush was a hasbeen.

I hope you will listen carefully to the testimony of President Bush's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Clarence Thomas. He is the black conservative who is to replace retiring Justice Thurgood Marshall. Here we have 1991 versus 1967, the year of Marshall's confirmation. During his testimony Judge Thomas will apprise you of what has been going on in America while you were away. America is no longer, if it ever was, a country obsessed by feminism, racism, militarism, or any of the other buzz words that trigger your hot air. As recently as last June, a Gallup poll found that a majority of Americans (and one-third of those polled were black) favor no more legislation aimed at reducing race, religious, and sex discrimination.

The trend toward judging an individual on his merits goes back quite a ways in Judge Thomas's America. But let me only point out that at about the time American Liberals sealed themselves off from the rest of the country, pollsters were coming up with interesting data. In 1980, a Gallup poll found that only 11 percent of your fellow Americans "agree with the proposition that 'to make up for past discrimination, women and members of minority groups should be given preferential treatment in getting jobs and places in college.'" Eighty-one percent believed that "ability as determined by test scores should be the main consideration" for employment and college admission. In 1985, 77 percent of blacks polled by Gallup felt this way. Here we are at 1991, and, believe me, Senator, most Americans are not as obsessed with abortion and racial or sexual hiring as you seem to think they are. Remember the aforementioned June poll.

After listening to Judge Thomas, you will perhaps also discard some of your stereotypes of blacks. Not all are socialists or advocates of government handouts. Not all believe in racial politics or affirmative action. Not all want the courts of the country to make the laws of the country. And finally, not all blacks are Democrats; increasing numbers are returning to the party of Lincoln.

But if you insist on making Judge Thomas out to be a political and judicial freak, take a look at the Court today and compare it with the Warren Court. That Court had a substantial majority of your kind of people on it, all eager, as *Newsweek* magazine put it recently, "to peer into the Constitution and create new rights." Today's Court has a conservative majority and will soon have a larger conservative majority: Are all its justices freaks?

The Court is as it is today because your party, amok in rancorous abstractions about its pet "isms," has won only one presidential election since 1964. The American majority has voted for a conservative presidential candidate for the last three elections. The electorate knew what it was doing. They oppose the kinds of things you and retiring Justice Marshall seem to think they favor, for instance, elaborate rights for criminals, abolishing the death penalty, favoring busing, quotas, judge-made law—in sum and in fine, removing government from the hands of the people and reposing it in the hands of elites and single-issue zealots.

Now, of course, you and fellow Liberal reactionaries are asking for "diversity" and "balance" on the court. But tell me, in what area of American life dominated by Liberal stand-patters is diversity allowed? How many Judge Thomases does one find in the universities, the media, or anywhere else where you have had your chance to politicize intellect? Diversity is indeed a good thing. Perhaps if Liberals had practiced it in *their* appointments where *they* dominate, they would not be so surprised to wake up in 1991 and see a Supreme Court reflecting an opinion they quite obviously do not understand, as you, Senator Metzenbaum, and your colleagues will demonstrate when you fall on Judge Thomas. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

MEMORY OF AN ELEPHANT

Here is how the Democrats are going to win the 1992 presidential election, which, incidentally, will be their first presidential win since 1976 and only their second since 1964 A.D.—back when you and I were young.

First of all, they are not going to enter any prominent Democrat until the last minute. In fact, for this election they may not even nominate a prominent Democrat. The way party leaders see it at this point, the less the public knows about their candidate the better. Right now the Democrats' only declared candidate is an ex-senator from—where else?—Massachusetts. But he is hardly the ideal candidate. Former senator Paul E. Tsongas has been listed in *Who's Who in the East* for over a decade. There is a lot of information in his *Who's Who* entry that could offend important members of the Democratic coalition, for instance, Eskimos, militant fat people, members of the Brotherhood of Hispanic Welders, members of Chicken Pox Anonymous. The Democratic party has become a very compassionate haven for minority groups, some of whose members can be touchy.

But the Democrats are not going to beat George Bush merely by the clever expedient of running a noncontroversial candidate. They are going to have to have issues with which to batter the Republicans, and they have them—in spades. The Democratic leadership here in this great city of Machiavels is no longer going to run on their old mainstay issues of peace, compassion, and bread for the masses.

Ever since 1964, when they portrayed the Republican candidate, Senator Barry Goldwater, as a madman avid to blow up the world, the Democrats have portrayed themselves as the party most likely to save us from nuclear holocaust and World War III. This gambit is now passé. At present there is no nation capable of actually fighting us in World War III, except perhaps Yugoslavia, and really the only American voters who fear World War III with the Yugoslavs are a few hundred thousand college professors, many of whom are now growing out of their 1960s phase and taking up golf. Thus, for the first time in decades, the Democrats will probably shelve the peace issue.

Other old standards in the Democratic campaign repertoire are also obsolete. Fewer and fewer Americans are responding to the Democrats' pleas for establishing Holiday Inns for the homeless, complete with limousine services

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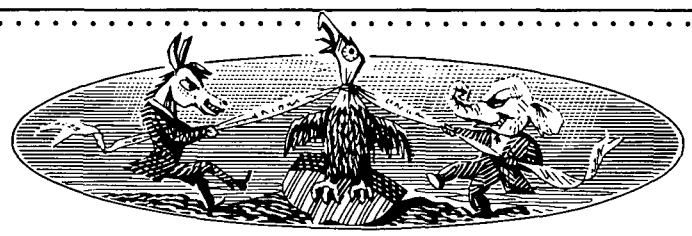
for transporting the homeless when they decide they need a lift. Compassion has its limits. So does paranoia. Not many Americans fear that the Republicans are going to reinstitute slavery in the South. Thus the race issue will not be such a prominent feature as in past campaigns.

Finally, the Democrats realize that they will have to abjure their venerable promise of bread for the masses (and expropriation of the fat cats). Most Americans doubt that the Democrats are helpful to the economy and realize that Democratic tax increases fall most heavily on the middle class. There just are not enough fat cats to pay for the Democrats' bread machine.

The Democrats are going to try something new. They plan to beat George Bush by proving that in 1980 Ronald Reagan and William Casey stole the presidential election from the ever-popular Jimmy Carter. Reaganites prevailed on Iranians to delay a hostage release until after the 1980 election, thereby dooming the re-election of the ever-popular Jimmy Carter. The ever-popular Jimmy Carter himself has demanded a congressional investigation. All Democrats recognize that it is only a matter of time until the Bush Administration is drowning in scandal over this dastardly conspiracy.

But that is not all. Recognizing the American people's insatiable interest in the Iran-contra skulduggery of some years back, the Democrats, in alliance with Special Prosecutor For Life Lawrence Walsh, are going to hold up George Bush's nominee to head the CIA until all the Republicans come forward and admit their guilt in the shameless bilking of the Ayatollah and the covert funneling of monies to the enemies of the Sandinista humanitarians. Finally, the Democrats have one more trump card guaranteed to finish off the Republicans in 1992: Watergate. The American people are still burned up about Watergate. The Democratic leadership knows this. If their Iran-contra issue and the theft of the 1980 election do not put the Republicans to rout, the Democrats can always open a new congressional inquiry into Watergate. And how about the Lindbergh kidnapping? □

CAPITOL IDEAS



CALIFORNIA CALAMITY

by Tom Bethell

"All the causes of the decay of Spain resolve themselves into one cause, bad government," Lord Macaulay wrote. California's decline, when it becomes conspicuous, will be attributable to the same cause. Macaulay added: "The effects of a change from good government to bad government are not fully felt for some time after the change has taken place." In California, the change cannot be pinpointed, but with the election of Gov. Pete Wilson, the state has definitely entered the era of bad government. A nominal Republican, Wilson has turned out to be a disaster—certainly a disaster for conservatives; no doubt also for California.

The overarching problem, to which Pete Wilson is a mere footnote, is that we live at a time when the idle and unproductive are regarded as morally superior to the productive, and as having the right to live at the expense of the productive. As a result, politics as currently practiced in the U.S. gives tremendous encouragement to the parasite hordes, who are awarded voting rights, entitlements, victim status, accusation privileges, state-subsidized lawyers, cash transfers, health benefits, and, perhaps most important of all, unofficial "representation" by a news media ready to set up a concerted howl of indignation should any of these benefits be reduced in the slightest degree. In 1991, it is still accepted without argument that the educated classes should act as the selfless advocates of the unproductive. It is an attitude that has persisted for twenty-five years or more in the U.S. and it shows no signs of abating.

All this might not matter too much if the productive were themselves effectively represented in the political arena. But they are not. This is the lot that has fallen to the Republican party, which for decades has been totally inadequate to the role. Representing the interests of the productive appears to carry with it a disabling stigma in our time. As a result, the Republican leadership has long been unable to stand up to the well-organized envy and greed (desiring the property of others) of the unproductive, and their political representatives. Socialism may have collapsed in Eastern Europe, but its animating emotions are alive and well in California.

Formerly the mayor of San Diego and junior senator from California, Wilson was elected governor in 1990, narrowly defeating Dianne Feinstein, the former mayor of San Francisco. Wilson enjoyed reluctant conservative support, mainly because it was feared that (as in 1980) victorious Democrats would gerrymander redistricting, once again giving them many additional congressional seats. As governor, however, Wilson has pursued a strategy of undisguised collaboration with Democrats, forming a coalition with them against his own party.

Since George Deukmejian took office, the California budget has doubled (the population increased by about 5 million in the same period, to 30 million today). In his second term, Deukmejian seemed to abandon resistance to the expansionist tendency of state government. Total state spending today is $55 billion (it was about $5 billion when Ronald Reagan was governor). By this spring it had become clear that the budget deficit was mounting to $12 billion or more.

One might assume that a Republican governor in such a situation would cut spending and that Democrats (deferring to their vocal constituents within the recipient classes) would raise taxes. But Wilson, who represents the constituency of government (the redistributing classes), aligned himself with the Democrats in the legislature, all of whom except one were willing to raise taxes. Wilson then exerted pressure on a sufficient number of Republicans to pass the largest tax increase in the state's history, with the two-thirds majority that the state constitution requires for budget matters. Sales taxes were raised by 1.25 cents (now 8.25 percent in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego counties); liquor and vehicle taxes were increased, and the top income tax rate was increased to 11 percent (from 9.3 percent). [See box for a list of the renegade Republicans.]

Renegade Roster

Republican assemblymen (and women) who went along with Pete Wilson's tax increases:

1. Carol Bentley (San Diego)
2. Gerald Felando (San Pedro)
3. Bill Filante (Marin)
4. Robert Frazee (Carlsbad)
5. Beverly Hansen (Santa Rosa)
6. Tricia Hunter (San Diego)
7. Bill Jones (Fresno)
8. David Kelley (Riverside)
9. Charles Quackenbush (San Jose)

One state assemblyman who did not go along with Wilson was 34-year-old Tom McClintock from Thousand Oaks, an outspoken critic of pusillanimous Republicanism—one of the few remaining in the state, apparently.

"Pete Wilson completely misrepresented his intentions and himself to the people of California in 1990," McClintock told me. "We are now seeing the real Wilson, who is further to the left than most mainstream Democrats." In his campaign, McClintock said, Wilson boasted that he was the only politician in the state who had balanced budgets without raising taxes, and he said of Dianne Feinstein: "She's a taxer-and-spender, and I'm not." With the new tax increases, said McClintock, "Pete Wilson is forcing the average California family to cut its budget by $1,000 so that he can increase the state's general fund budget by eleven percent."

The tax increases are comparable in size to those enacted in New Jersey last year by Gov. Jim Florio. In conformity with the dishonest budget-reporting practices that are now standard journalistic practice nationwide, the spending increases that accompany Wilson's tax increases have been referred to as spending cuts. It's the same old

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent and a fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

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business of trimming back a planned massive increase and calling it a cut. The "cuts," Daniel Weintraub of the *Los Angeles Times* belatedly recognized, "are reductions from projected spending [increases]." (Now they tell us.)

Wilson held out for changes in the workers' compensation law, which permits malingerers to recover "psychic damages" caused by "stress." It costs California businesses $10 billion a year. At present, malingerers and their lawyers can strike gold by claiming that 10 percent of such "stress" is job-related. Wilson tried to get this increased to 50 percent, but failed. Workers'-comp lawyers funnel some of their winnings back into Sacramento fundraisers, so that the state legislature is "corrupted" by the system, as Wilson put it. But he was plainly so eager to raise taxes that the Democrats knew all they had to do was sit tight and Wilson would meet them nine-tenths of the way.

Wilson wanted an elimination of cost-of-living adjustments on many programs; a five-year suspension was all they gave him. He did get a 4.4 percent reduction in some welfare payments (instead of the 8.8 percent he sought), but the welfare rolls in the state have been exploding, and no doubt the reduction will not make any difference. (There has been no news media howling about budget cutbacks hurting the poor, and, when that dog doesn't bark, nothing much has changed.)

"Wilson has proved to be far more liberal—or at least more accommodating of liberals—than all but his most adamant conservative detractors had imagined," wrote Doug Willis, who has covered California politics for the Associated Press for more than two decades. He noted that Wilson "can and will use reapportionment as a stronger weapon against conservatives than anything Democrats would attempt." One Assembly seat was vacated this year when the incumbent was elected to the state senate. The district is so solidly Republican that no Democrat entered the race. But the leading Republican candidate was an anti-abortion activist who had also supported a resolution, passed this year by a conservative Republican group, urging Wilson to re-register as a Democrat. "Wilson not only recruited a better known moderate Republican," Willis wrote, "but he delivered a well-financed and thoroughly professional campaign management team" to the candidate—who was once chief of staff to Democratic governor Jerry Brown. Wilson, incidentally, is pro-abortion and doesn't even pretend to agonize about it, Cuomo-style.

Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, San Francisco Democrat and clothes-horse, has been suitably appreciative of Pete Wilson. It had been a "mean feat" for the governor to persuade nine Republicans to vote for massive tax increases, he noted, adding: "I think the reputation of the governor has been enhanced."

This has also been the opinion of most local journalists, who have been touting Wilson as a presidential candidate in 1996. Lou Cannon, whose slanted reporting for the *Washington Post* was a feature of the Reagan years, is ecstatic about Wilson. In May he contributed a Style section profile of Wilson which was a notable addition to the "Friend and Foe Alike" genre. Such stories note with mock amazement that their subject has done something truly surprising—he has "surprised friend and foe alike."

Stories in the genre dishonestly pretend that both sides are *equally* surprised, but fail to note that conservatives get the unpleasant surprise. (Liberals who betray their friends are vilified as sellouts, not praised as friend-and-foe surprisers.) Cannon misleadingly claimed that Wilson had "proved iconoclastic" on taxes (surprised friend), but was "not delighting liberals, either." (Surprised foe—and this was Cannon-baloney.) Several weeks later, in his column, Cannon himself was one delighted liberal who praised Wilson for his "courage" in raising

"Nurse, cancel my appointments . . . I have a country to invade!"

If you think physicians just collect specimens and perform lobotomies, consider:

*William Walker, who led three incursions into Nicaragua and established the first democratic government there.

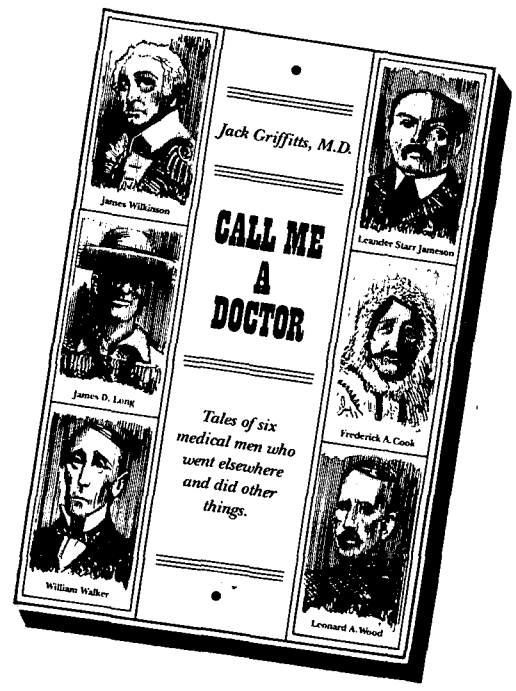
*James D. Long, who hobnobbed with the pirate Jean Lafitte and later invaded Mexico.

*Frederick A. Cook, who discovered the North Pole with Lt. Peary, USN.

*Leonard A. Wood, "Rough Rider" organizer, friend of Teddy Roosevelt, and boss of George Patton.

*Leander Starr Jameson, a Scotsman who raided the Boers for Cecil Rhodes in South Africa.

*James Wilkinson, governor of the new Louisiana Territory who conspired with Mexico and exposed Aaron Burr.



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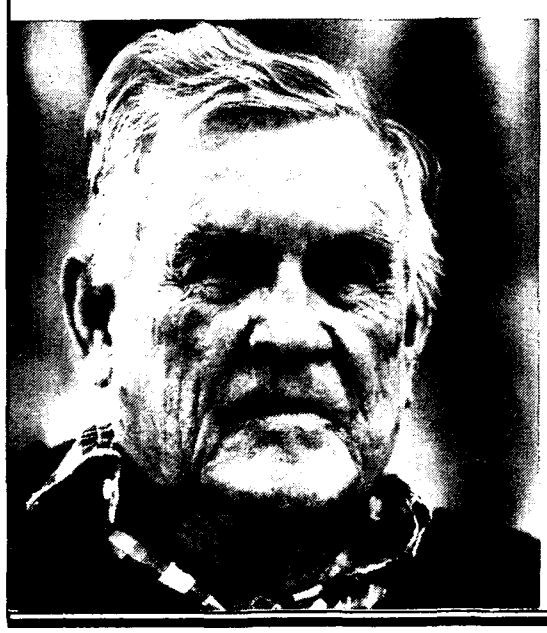

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taxes "to provide constituents with the basic services to which they are entitled."

Jerry Roberts and Robert Gunnison of the *San Francisco Chronicle* echoed the Friend-and-Foe theme when they wrote that the budget "represents a chance for Wilson to establish himself politically as an effective and independent chief executive who stood up to both parties in a crisis." This begged the question of why a governor is expected to stand up to his own party, and how Wilson was standing up to the Democrats. Two months later, Vlae Kershner of the *Chronicle* Sacramento bureau wrote that Wilson had scored a "major political victory" when he "arm-twisted a reluctant Assembly into passing a budget that almost every person in the state is going to dislike." Kershner failed to explain why something that annoys "everybody" should be construed as a political victory, and he failed to note that Republicans had been arm-twisted, not Democrats. George Skelton of the *Los Angeles Times* Sacramento bureau noted the "irony" that in June the Republican governor was finding it difficult to get Republicans to vote for a tax increase, when he might more logically have noted the irony that the governor was trying to get the Republicans to adopt the Democrats' position, rather than vice versa.

In general, political reporting in California is every bit as tendentious as these quotes suggest. In newsrooms across the state, but especially in the major papers, expansion of state power is regarded as an unqualified good. It will be interesting to see if the change in the law that not only raises the state sales tax but makes the whole tax applicable to newspapers and magazines for the first time, will encourage timid publishers to knock on the doors of their editorial ivory towers and ask what the hell is going on.

There was an interesting colloquy in June. The Laffer Curve was mentioned in the Assembly, and Republicans were said to be resisting an income tax increase on the grounds that it might drive businesses out of the state. "Democrats dispute that contention, sometimes sarcastically," Kershner wrote in the *Chronicle*. "Assemblyman Richard Floyd, D-Hawthorne, drew guffaws on the floor when he said: 'They're going to take all those yachts from Newport Harbor and move them to Tonopah, Nevada.'" (Laffer now predicts an "unpleasant surprise" for California.)

I am indebted to Steve Hayward of the Claremont Institute for pointing out the ads that were beginning to appear in California magazines even before Wilson's massive tax increase became law. "People are discovering the best place to do business in California," proclaims the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada: "Western Nevada." In the Tahoe area you only have to move a few blocks to escape Wilson's levies, and I'm told that ex-California business is already booming in Nevada. Similar ads have been taken out by chambers of commerce in Utah and Idaho.

Further evidence of bad government could take pages to list: Wilson has created an environmental protection agency; he is expected to sign a law adding homosexuals to the list of protected minorities; San Francisco enacted a "domestic partners" law which is intended to saddle city government with the costs of some homosexual disease; strict rent-control ("vacancy control") has also been enacted in San Francisco, although a petition drive may overturn it. San Francisco's freeways have not been repaired since the 1989 earthquake, and when the U.S. Navy announced it was leaving Hunters Point shipyard, Art Agnos, the left-wing mayor of San Francisco, announced: "Whoever tries to buy it is going to have a hell of a time with the permit process, if it ain't me" (meaning the city).

If you're thinking of moving west, keep Nevada in mind. □

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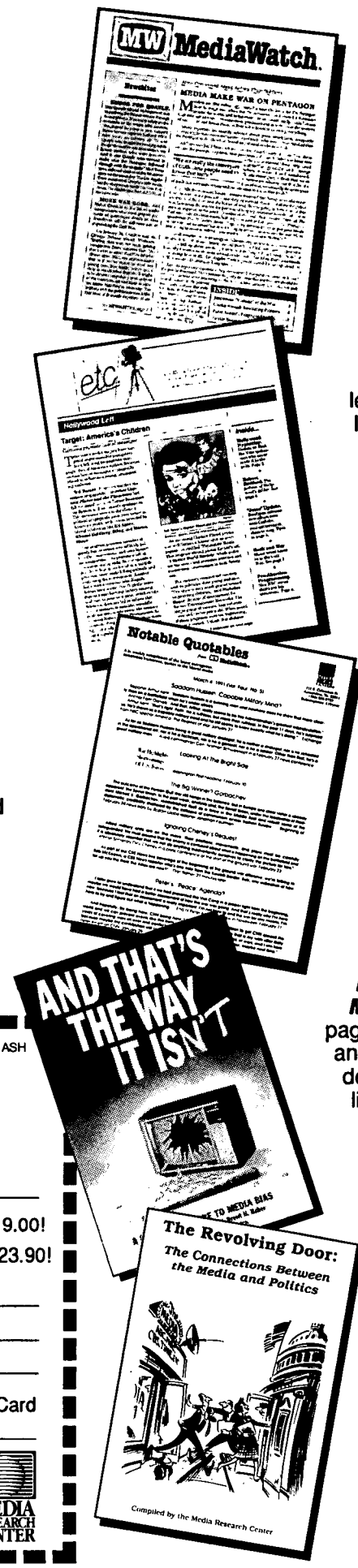

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Matias Rojas Bruce

CUBA'S OPEN BOATS

As Cuba's society collapses, desperate islanders are paddling out to sea in hopes of reaching southern Florida. Thousands have made it; more have died. A report from the rescue effort.

Miami

"Try to imagine," says Jose Basulto, "that you've been away from your country for thirty years, and then, when you finally see it, you can't go there. I can't really describe it." Basulto was referring to the weekly flights he pilots in search of *balseros*, the Cuban "raft-people" who drift out of Cuban territorial waters on inner tubes, lashed boards, and pieces of styrofoam in hopes of washing ashore on the Florida Keys or being picked up by passing ships. By mid-June of this year, 1,143 balseros—men, women, and children—had been rescued in the Strait of Florida, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. At that rate, this year's total will be easily five times the 467 rescued last year, and about forty times the number rescued in 1988, the year the statistics began to pick up.

On the weekend of June 14, the Cuban-American community at Cayo Hueso raised money for the funeral of two balseros—a young man and a woman, whose bodies were found on different rafts. No one knows their names, or where they were from; the funeral was a symbolic one. Empty rafts wash up on beaches, are spotted from planes, or discovered by horrified sports fishermen and weekend sailors. Each evening the six o'clock news has a fresh story about a group or two of fortunate ones salvaged by the Coast Guard, but the empty rafts are simply too ubiquitous to allow Floridians to ignore the obvious: most balseros do not survive the crossing.

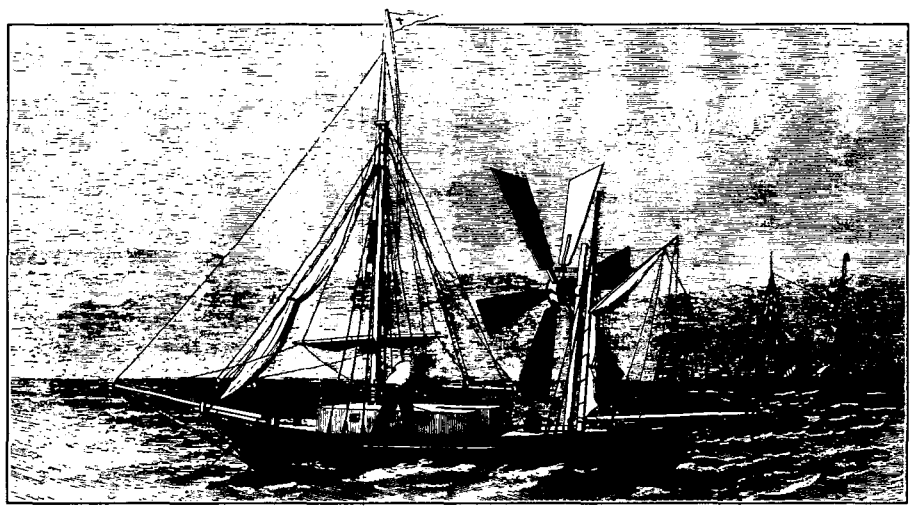
There is a wide range of estimates on the odds of making it alive. Lazaro Colome Sandoval, who cast off from the Havana suburb of Playa Baracoa in early June, says that, of the fifty people who have left his town, "there are only two that we never heard from again—I'm sure the rest got across." But then again, Colome's perception may be tainted by the fact that he is surely the luckiest balsero ever to leave Cuba. He left on a whim one Saturday afternoon aboard a 4½x4½-foot styrofoam board that a friend used for swimming off the beach; he brought no food and no water. On Tuesday morning Colome was picked up by Queen Elizabeth's yacht as it headed back to England after Her Majesty's state visit.

Colome's estimate is the most optimistic by far. According to Basulto, the first six rafts his group found were empty, meaning those aboard had most likely died. "In the messages we send to Cuba through Radio Marti, we try to discourage them from trying. We tell them their chances are one in four at best, we tell them to wait, that Castro's days are numbered," he says. "But we keep getting messages from people in Cuba telling us they'll try anyway, that they can't live there any longer."

Diego Suarez, immigration expert at the Cuban American National Foundation, agrees with Basulto's estimate. "Depending on the seasonal conditions, I would say one in three to one in four probably make it." Other numbers thrown around in the Miami news media put the odds at about one in ten. Whatever the odds, Basulto calls it "Cuban Russian Roulette."

The balseros' ordeal has generated a great deal of sympathy. In May of last year, a group of Cuban-Americans sailed dozens of ships and boats to Cuba's 20-mile territorial limit, at about the same longitude as Havana. They called it the Flotilla of Cuban Solidarity and Brotherhood. From that far off the coast, however, they realized they were no more visible than the radio waves coming from Radio Marti's coverage. At that point, Basulto says, "a group of us started talking about a more practical way of showing our solidarity." His efforts, and those of other Cuban-Americans, yielded Brothers to the Rescue, dedicated to air-patrolling the Strait of Florida for balseros. Since May of this year, 150 people of a dozen nationalities have volunteered their private planes, their flying skills, or simply their time to serve as in-flight observers.

The morning I flew with them, there were two Americans, a German woman, two Argentines, a cable-TV crew, and Ruben Gonzalez, who three weeks earlier had been the first balsero spotted by the fledgling group. We flew one twin-engine and two single-engine planes back and forth along pre-arranged routes, at about 350 feet above the water. At that height, with the air inside the closed cabin at a muggy 85 degrees, even the most experienced pilots get airsick. The flights last for as long as the gas supply—about four hours on the actual search route.



Once the Brothers spot a manned raft, they notify the Coast Guard, which then sends a patrol boat to the site. According to Coast Guard spokesman Lt. Commander Jeff Karonis, "The Coast Guard responds to the Brothers' calls as it would respond to any private citizen's report of sighting a raft." Late this spring, the Coast Guard itself started to run special rescue patrols, but Karonis stresses that their purpose is to save lives, *not* to encourage balseros. "We are not signaling where we are going to be. We schedule the patrols based on certain criteria we reserve the right not to divulge."

For Duke Austin of the Immigration and Naturalization Service press office, the balseros could represent a particular problem. "For all we know, these people might be dangerous criminals that require incarceration. At least we are sure that people coming in with visas don't have a criminal background. There is evidence that some of these [balseros] might have criminal backgrounds." Of course, since they come from a country where paddling out to sea on a raft is itself a criminal offense, *all* balseros have criminal backgrounds. In the past, frustrated balseros have been accused of "stealing" their jerry-built rafts, which are, like everything else in Cuba, "state property." According to Austin, "Unfortunately, Cubans are not like Haitians. At least we can deport Haitians back to Haiti, and set an example to those back home. With Cubans, deportation is not an option, and we can't keep them in detention forever."

People like Austin worry that the wave of balseros could turn out to be a reprise

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of 1980, when, after a number of Cuban dissidents took refuge in the Peruvian embassy in Havana, President Jimmy Carter announced he would accept any and all Cubans Castro would permit to emigrate. In the following three months, 125,000 Cubans emigrated from the port of Mariel in private boats. Even though there were many legitimate refugees among them, Castro used the opportunity to throw in Cuba's most hardened criminals, psychiatric cases, and sex offenders.

Any such comparison of the balseros to the *marielitos* is unfair. First, and obviously, the balseros are arriving on nowhere near the scale of the 125,000 who came during the boatlift. Second, the balseros came of their own volition, unlike Castro's hand-picked marielitos. Finally, if shady backgrounds were the hallmark of the marielitos, youth and a desire to improve their condition seem to be the equivalent among the balseros.

Countless private efforts have been launched by Cuban-Americans on hearing that a certain friend or family member will be trying his luck on a certain day. Desperate relatives hire private planes and fishing boats to search the strait for their people. The morning I flew with the Brothers, we received notice that an entire family had left Havana the previous Saturday; the plane hired by their Miami relatives had yet to locate them. Later that day the Coast Guard picked up what was most likely this family (although, in some sort of last-minute crisis, they had replaced the children with the family dog).

These private efforts can be highly dangerous. This past June, the Cuban coast guard arrested two Miami Cubans aboard a private boat who had been searching for balsero relatives. They were taken to Havana, where they remain imprisoned with what looks like a pretty uncertain future. U.S. officials say it is unclear whether the boat was inside Cuban territorial waters, and whether the crew had their U.S. immigration papers in order. One cretinous U.S. official even said: "It might be a case of self-deportation."

"The balseros are typically men in their late twenties and early thirties," says Lizette Alvarez, immigration reporter for the *Miami Herald*. "Only in the past couple of months have we begun to find some women and children among the people picked up. Almost all the balseros I've seen are white." An important point. Since most of the Cubans who have immigrated to Miami in the past three decades have been white (Cuba was about one-third white in 1960 and is about one-tenth white today), this would indicate that many balseros have relatives in the United States—an indication that Diego Suarez confirms. "Our foundation offers the balseros as much help as they need with their paperwork," says Suarez, "and it would offer other kinds of help if they needed it, but the fact is that as soon as word gets out that so-and-so's cousin's niece's husband has arrived, the families rush to the detention center with food, clothes, and whatever else they can offer."

Most balseros were born after the revolution. They are Castro's children, raised to become the future of Cuba's socialist paradise. Beyond their age and race, however, it gets harder to generalize about them. Many balseros are factory workers, though there are among them a very significant number of experienced technicians, university students, and professionals. But the Cuban elite by and large prefer safer methods. According to Suarez, at least three hundred Cubans of the very highest echelons have defected this year, most prominent among them trumpeter Arturo Sandoval, who asked for asylum in Greece while touring with Dizzy Gillespie's band, and whose new album is called "Flight to Freedom."

Even relatives of the party elite have left. The nephew of the late Col. Tony de la Guardia—who was charged with drug trafficking and executed after a show trial in the summer of 1989—left for Miami in a sailboat with his girlfriend and some of his buddies. Many Juventudes Comunistas (Castro Youth) have chosen the risks of a raft over a future in the party leadership. The conditions are such that all it seems to take to jump on a raft and head for Miami is youthful recklessness.

Balseros are not even close to the largest source of immigration from Cuba. This year about three thousand Cubans will be admitted as refugees. According to the Cuban American National Foundation, 35 to 50 percent of the approximately 57,000 Cubans who receive U.S. non-immigrant visas this year will "overstay their visas," as the State Department euphemistically puts it. The 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act grants de facto residency (their status will be "reconsidered") to any Cuban citizen who has spent a year in the United States. Non-immigrant visas have doubled in the past year, since Castro lowered the age requirement from 55 for women and 60 for men to 35 and 40, respectively.

"We tell them their chances are one in four at best, we tell them to wait, that Castro's days are numbered. But we keep getting messages from people in Cuba telling us they'll try anyway, that they can't live there any longer."

Ruben Gonzalez, 26, with a wife and two daughters in Cuba, was trained as a construction technician, and had attended night school to become an architect. His father, a doctor, had been a captain in the Sierra Maestra and the head of a Havana military hospital. Just a few minutes with the soft-spoken Gonzalez gives one the feeling that he came to the right country. Back in Cuba, in addition to his regular job, he handcrafted plastic jewelry to sell on the black market, earning enough to buy a brand-new Yamaha fishing engine from a foreign sailor in Havana. ("I still had money left," he remarks.) He and three other raft-mates were forty miles north of Cuba when a Brothers plane spotted them. According to the observer who saw them, their raft was so well built that it looked like a Zodiac. Gonzalez adds, "The engine was working just fine, and we had plenty of fuel left." When I interviewed him for this article he was already making arrangements to go retrieve his engine from the Coast Guard station at Cayo Hueso.

"When I was in the Service," Gonzalez says, staring out the window of the plane at the coast he left only weeks before, "I realized that the revolution was a bunch of bull. I realized that there would always be privileged ones, and I felt that in such a hypocritical society, I had no future." Almost to a man, the balseros cite desperation and disaffection as reasons for leaving. "Back in Havana," he says, "every single young person I know wants to leave, but not everybody can." Gonzalez and his three brothers, who left before him, waited until their mother was safe in Miami on a tourist visa before they risked leaving the island. All of them made it.

Other variables make escape more pressing than in previous years. Added to Cuban youth's despair at the future has come a dramatic and dangerous worsening of conditions following the collapse of the Iron Curtain. "In Cuba there is absolutely nothing," says Colome. "We lack *everything*—from soap to breakfast food to tractors." Some months ago, when a single Soviet grain shipment failed to reach Cuba, hundreds of thousands of chickens had to be slaughtered for lack of feed. This led to rationing for eggs, one of Cuba's main sources of protein. Last Christmas, Cubans went without *lechon asado*, the roast pig dish that is to Cuban Christmas what turkey is to American Thanksgiving, after Fidel—suddenly turning animal-rights activist—declared an "amnesty" for the pigs. There are endless stories of this sort, like the one about the Czech cooling fans, or the Hungarian buses, neither of which are delivered anymore. Now Cubans are sweating it out and pedaling their bikes to work.

Most balseros make their attempts at night from beaches outside Havana. "The smartest thing to do," says Luis Almaguir, one of Gonzalez's raft-mates, "is to wait for the American TV movies on Saturday nights. Eight to ten and ten to midnight—that's when nobody is outside." Attempting to leave the island is still a criminal offense, and stories abound of early-day balseros being washed ashore on Cuban military bases and not seeing the light of day for the next five years. But very few of the balseros reaching Florida in the last year report having trouble leaving the island. With the exception of those who have black marks on their files, balseros do not really expect more than a reprimand and a fine if caught. Gonzalez recruited some drunken youngsters partying on the beach to help him carry his raft. "We were followed by a police spotlight almost from the minute we left the beach," he says, although there was no shooting, nor any other attempt to get them to stop. "Still, things have gotten a little tougher than a couple of months ago, when families were throwing neighborhood parties to celebrate those leaving the next morning."

A main reason for Castro's laxity this past spring, according to the INS's Austin, is that "Castro has a history of opening the political pressure valve every eight or ten years, and he hadn't done it since the marielitos." The marked tightening up as the summer wore on may have been due to Fidel's obsession with the August Pan-American Games in Havana. He had hoped that the games would provide a showcase for "Cuba, the Island Paradise," boosting tourism and hard-currency revenue. "It wouldn't look very good," says Colome, "if there were protests spoiling the horizon." Or, for that matter, balseros leaping off the Havana embankments in front of foreign TV crews.

Jorge Mas Canosa, chairman of the Cuban American National Foundation, has said that Castro won't last the year. Ruben Gonzalez gives him a year, tops: "It'll be the military. They'll have to take him out." There are those who fear that if Castro goes down, he'll take Cuba with him. Whatever the outcome, Cubans can hardly be blamed for their impatience, and for the foreseeable future empty rafts will continue to wash up on the coasts of southern Florida. □

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Brit Hume

THE GROUNDING OF AIR SUNUNU

Using Air Force planes wasn't even John Sununu's idea in the first place, and the controversy over his travels should have been short-lived. But he let pride get in the way and forgot an important Washington maxim: staffers ultimately don't matter.

On April 23, the day John Sununu released the first public accounting of his travel as the President's chief of staff aboard government planes, a group of network TV correspondents was sitting in the White House Roosevelt Room awaiting a foreign policy briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Gates. Sununu walked by in the hallway and one of the reporters called to him. He came in and the reporter asked him to clarify a minor point in his travel report. As Sununu was explaining, Mary Tillotson of CNN began making notes. Sununu stopped talking, and with a gesture of disgust, turned and stalked out of the room, leaving the reporters staring in wonder.

Wonder, but not surprise. Sununu has long been famous for his difficulties in getting along with Washington's press corps, even those members of it favorably disposed to him. This does much to explain how what should have been a brief and trivial embarrassment turned into a protracted controversy that diminished Sununu's influence and threatened his job. The media bear much of the responsibility, as they always do. They portrayed every revelation in the worst possible light, as they always do. But the Washington media are a lot like the Washington summer weather: an unpleasant fact of life, but a predictable one. It is possible to live with them, if one is willing to make some accommodations.

For a professional politician, however, John Sununu seems strangely unaccustomed to accommodation. The *New Republic*'s Fred Barnes, who has written both admiringly and critically of Sununu, suggested on "Nightline" that Sununu's high-handed style had made other White House staffers only too eager to tell reporters about his peregrinations aboard Air Force jets, and had left him without friends or defenders when the stories broke. The next day, Sununu telephoned Barnes to ask derisively if that meant he should "kiss the press's ass." Barnes said that wasn't what he had in mind, but Sununu didn't ask what he did have in mind. Taking advice isn't Sununu's way.

Not that Sununu should seek advice from reporters, let alone kiss them anywhere. But he might try talking to them—and to the public—in a way that doesn't invariably sound like obfuscating doubletalk. For instance, on "This Week with David Brinkley" (June 16), Sununu, speaking of a recent Bush address, dispensed this gem:

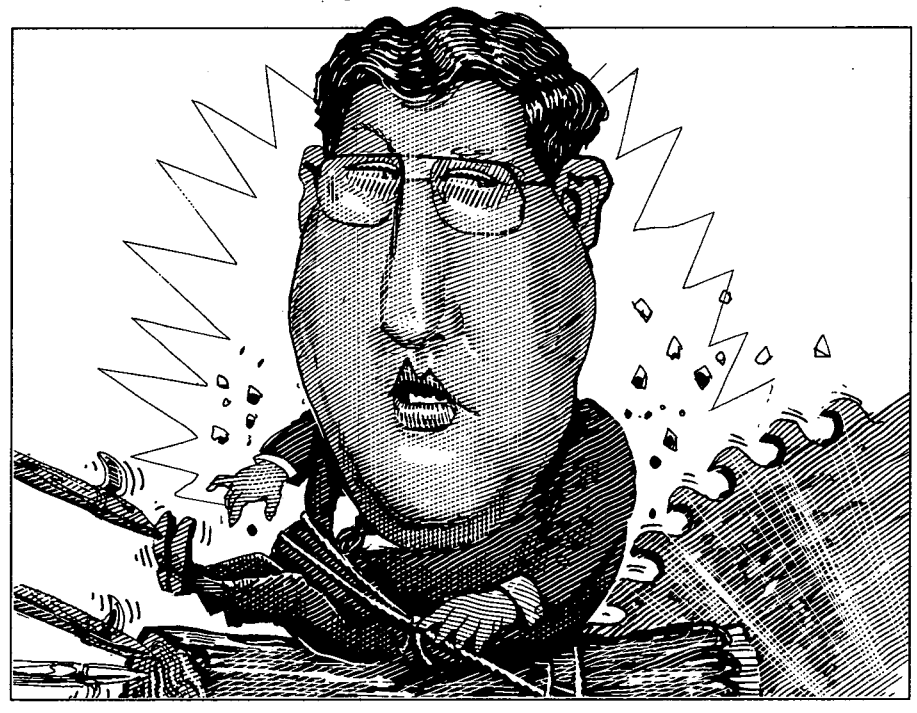
> We felt that it was a good event, that the kind of speech that it was was one in which the content was significant. . . . It was the kind of speech that we really do think the substance was well reported and that's what we wanted to get out, the message that there is a reality to the structure of what the President is doing and that the Congress has failed to act.

There may have been a reality to the structure of that answer, but it surely failed to bear all that verbiage.

"Structure" is one of the governor's favorite words. On that same broadcast, he couldn't stop saying it. He accused the Democrats of favoring a "socialized structure" for health care. He said the President had communicated with President Gaviria of Colombia "through the structure." He spoke of looking forward to the happy day when the chief of staff wouldn't have to be in 24-hour contact with the President as "getting to that structure." He even explained his use of a corporate jet to get home from a political trip by saying, "The structure of the jet was that if there was an emergency, they could get me in the air." In other words, the plane had a radio.

It may seem unfair to make fun of the language of a public official picking his way through the minefield of a Sunday talk program. But there is a flabby grandiloquence to Sununu's speech that matches his concept of his job, and of himself. It is, to be sure, a murderous job. Sununu works long hours and the President's preoccupation with foreign policy has left much of domestic policy to him, with help from budget director Richard Darman. Sununu is a principal architect of the successful veto strategy that has kept the White House a major player in domestic legislation despite the Democrats' control of both houses of Congress. He was also a key figure in the negotiations that led to last year's budget deal. Though that agreement was widely derided, it looks better to Republicans all the time, as the President's opponents now find themselves cut off from the familiar pre-election game of passing costly new benefit programs and daring the President to veto them. This time, the Democrats not only agreed to ceilings on spending, but also to "walls." They can't invade the military budget, for example, to pay for new social spending. And new domestic programs can't even be offered without some way to pay for them—either by cutting some other domestic program or by proposing new taxes, neither a politically attractive alternative.

Sununu has also played the political heavy, taking on—among others—the environmental and civil rights lobbies. The President, a gregarious and likable man by nature, has been freed to play Mr. Nice Guy with everybody but Saddam Hussein. While it has made Sununu many enemies inside the White House, Sununu's hard-nosed management style has also made life easier for the President. Despite Mr. Bush's reputation as a "hands-on" chief executive, he is no micro-manager. In addition, Sununu is a certified conservative, and an effective ambassador to the Republican right from a President who is often thought of as a closet moderate.



What Sununu is not is a millionaire. He is surrounded by them, though. Bush, Baker, Scowcroft, Brady, Darman—all rich men to whom it is no problem to abide by the fastidious ethical standards Bush has set for his administration. Sununu, who probably works harder than any of them except Baker, lives paycheck-to-paycheck, trying to take care of eight children, two

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still at home and two—until this spring—at college. Small wonder that he came to appreciate and feel he deserved his few White House perquisites—a car and driver and use of government planes.

What's more, he agreed only reluctantly to use the planes. It happened after a Bush visit to New Jersey in April 1989, at the height of that year's budget negotiations. Sununu stayed behind that day in New Jersey, and his return by commercial flight was delayed for hours because the plane was late. The White House had been trying to reach him about the budget deal, but didn't want him paged over the loudspeakers in Newark Airport. The staff, in the person of the White House military office, informed him upon his return that it was White House policy, dating back to the Reagan Administration, for the chief of staff to travel on Air Force planes, where he would always be reachable by phone. Sununu at first scoffed at the idea, but agreed when a copy of the memo setting out the policy was shown to him.

So imagine his reaction when the *Washington Post*, a newspaper that had shown him little favor, broke the story of his travel by government jet. He put out word that his trips were all done by the book, which by and large they were. But the image of a White House bigshot whistling up Air Force planes to fly him wherever he chooses is the kind of story the media love. Even self-important Washington correspondents like to think they are abiding by the old journalistic motto: "Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." John Sununu, with his large family and small means, might be the least comfortable member of the Bush team, but with his bay window and know-it-all manner, he fits the mold of a fat-cat.

There were inevitable questions about how Sununu's use of Air Force planes to go on ski trips and to the dentist squared with the President's pledge to avoid even the "appearance of impropriety." That left the White House with little choice but to "review" (read: revise) the travel policy, and Sununu with little choice but to make a public accounting of his travels. A new travel policy was issued, with White House counsel C. Boyden Gray (another millionaire) the new arbiter of the chief of staff's requests for Air Force planes. Along with it came Sununu's report on where he had flown and how much he had reimbursed. It was a humiliation. Sununu had had his wings publicly clipped and reporters were picking through the details of his dental appointments and trips with his family. But that should have been the end of the whole thing, and, after a couple of days of stories, it seemed it was.

But then Sununu, like other Washington magnificoes who have come to grief before him, showed that being smart is not the same as being wise. A wise man might have cut down his travels for a while, taken a few well-publicized commercial flights, and poked a little fun at himself. Sununu is a witty man and there is nothing like a bit of self-effacing humor to redeem a politician on the spot in Washington. He did make a small joke around the White House: Question: What's the difference between the Iraqi Air Force and Air Sununu? Answer: Air Sununu makes a lot more flights. But there would be no commercial flights, nor any self-denigrating witticisms in public.

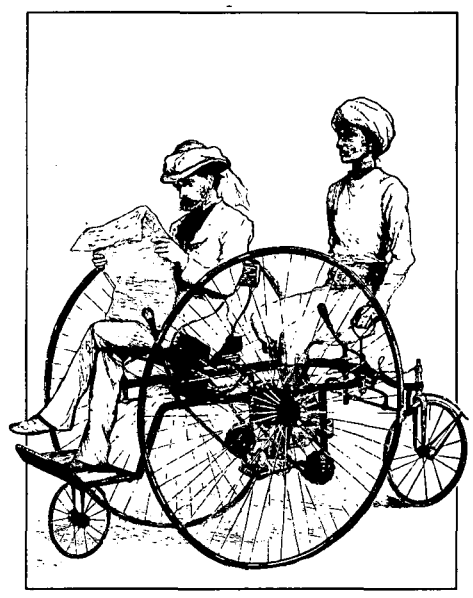
Instead, Sununu, ever the smart guy, found ways around the new White House regulations, thus avoiding the indignity of an airport boarding lounge where someone might make a crack about his reduced circumstances. Political trips, to GOP fundraisers and other such events, would now be taken in private corporate planes. Never mind that this put the governor, his staff, and the GOP in the position of soliciting favors from private interests, nearly all of which have some stake in government policy. Such plane rides are legal, as an "in-kind" political contribution. But what about personal excursions? On June 12, the governor took the morning off to go to a stamp auction in New York. Under the new rules, he couldn't take an Air Force plane because it wasn't official business. So he had his government chauffeur drive him to New York, which allowed him to work and use the phone in the car during the four-hour drive. Although much would later be made of the cost to the taxpayers, it was, in fact, marginal. The car and driver would have sat around the White House all day if Sununu had not used them. The only added cost was the gasoline and tolls. No big deal, right?

Wrong. The car trip to New York was permissible under the rules, practical in allowing the governor to get some work done, and cheap. But the image of Sununu getting into his government Chrysler sedan (it's not a limousine, though the media would inevitably describe it as such) and ordering the driver to take him to New York just looked terrible, especially in the midst of a controversy that turned on the appearance of impropriety. And the corporate ride-bumming looked just as bad. When it all came to light in *Newsweek*, Sununu was driven to new levels of self-aggrandizement to justify it.

On the Brinkley show of June 16, he told Sam Donaldson, in effect, that he had had to take the car because the nation could not endure the risk of his being out of touch for even an hour aboard the New York–Washington shuttle. "My job is a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day job. That's why I have a door-to-door car and driver assigned to me," Sununu declared. "I have to be able to communicate, to work on sensitive papers, to coordinate the White House activities, even when I'm traveling. . . . That responsibility is there and it is not only a critical part of my being able to do that, but it is in the national interest."

Well, bull. Remember, this is the same Sununu who at first balked at the idea of using Air Force planes because he thought it unnecessary. He was persuaded to do so because it was White House policy. But that policy had been abandoned. In the meantime, though, Sununu would have us believe he had become such an indispensable public servant that not an hour could pass at the White House without him. He had to call in "every 15 minutes to make sure what was going on," he said. Sununu has long claimed that he has subordinated his own interests and identity to serve the President. But by now it had become clear to everybody but Sununu himself that what was at stake was not his responsibilities, but his pride.

Sununu stopped talking, and with a gesture of disgust, turned and stalked out of the room, leaving the reporters staring in wonder.



There's more. Reporters began asking the White House about another Sununu political trip to Chicago aboard a private jet. When officials relayed the inquiries to the governor, he said he knew nothing about how it was arranged, or who actually paid for it, that all such details had been handled by others. After much confusion over who sponsored the trip, it was finally determined that Washington real estate developer Stuart Bernstein had done so at Sununu's personal request. So the governor had lied about his role in arranging it, as Marlin Fitzwater acknowledged in one of his daily briefings, albeit without using the word "lie." This led to yet another change in White House travel policy, forbidding Sununu or his staff to solicit private plane rides. And Sununu, on Saturday, June 22, issued a brief statement saying that "mistakes were made" and "my own mistakes contributed."

It was the closest thing to an apology anyone had heard from Sununu, and it seemed possible he had learned his lesson. But around the White House, few believed it. "He just doesn't get it," said one senior official not normally given to such criticisms.

What Sununu doesn't get, it seems, is the peculiar status enjoyed by Washington's vast army of unelected staff. They can amass enormous power and even some celebrity, particularly as lightning rods deflecting criticism from their bosses. But it is an abiding rule that they must never, ever confuse their status with that of their elected principals. Texas congressman Henry Gonzalez put it succinctly after he fired Philadelphia prosecutor Richard Sprague as the chief counsel of the House Assassinations Committee more than a decade ago. Sprague had come to town on a wave of publicity, and immediately began holding news conferences to announce the direction in which the investigations of the Kennedy and King murders were going. Gonzalez, then the committee's chairman, canned him, explaining, "Staffers should be on tap, not on top."

John Sununu's mistake is similar to Sprague's. He imagines that in the political scheme of things, his personal travail with the Washington media, his perquisites, and his pride matter. They don't. What matters is the President's political standing, and anything any staffer does that diminishes it is a cardinal no-no. The nation's capital has been described as a land of clerks and kings, in which the elected officials are the kings and everybody else, no matter how powerful, how overworked, is a clerk. It can't be easy for Sununu, a political figure presumed to have presidential ambitions of his own, to accept that and the relative obscurity that comes with it. But on June 24, as he arrived to make a speech just outside Washington, Sununu found himself pursued down hallways by TV cameras and reporters demanding to know if he was about to be fired. Compared to that, a little obscurity might be just the thing. □

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Thomas Mallon

TRAVELS WITH MY VEEP

With Dan Quayle in Memphis, Tennessee, and Huntington, Indiana.

Between Dan Quayle and four members of the working press sit nine men with guns. Air Force Two is heading toward Memphis, Tennessee, for a day of charity, politics, and golf; as soon as she was "wheels up" from Andrews AFB, at 9:04 a.m. on this warm June morning, one of the nine Secret Servicemen reached for a wall phone in the main cabin to report that the Vice President was aloft. The schedule for this day trip runs to fourteen pages, though its bulk is more reflective of precision than frenzy:

6:50 p.m.	THE VICE PRESIDENT arrives Tournament Room and remains standing. Mr. Jim Barksdale makes brief remarks and introduces THE VICE PRESIDENT.
6:55 p.m.	THE VICE PRESIDENT proceeds to Stand Up Microphone and begins Brief Remarks.
7:00 p.m.	THE VICE PRESIDENT concludes Brief Remarks and proceeds to motorcade for boarding.

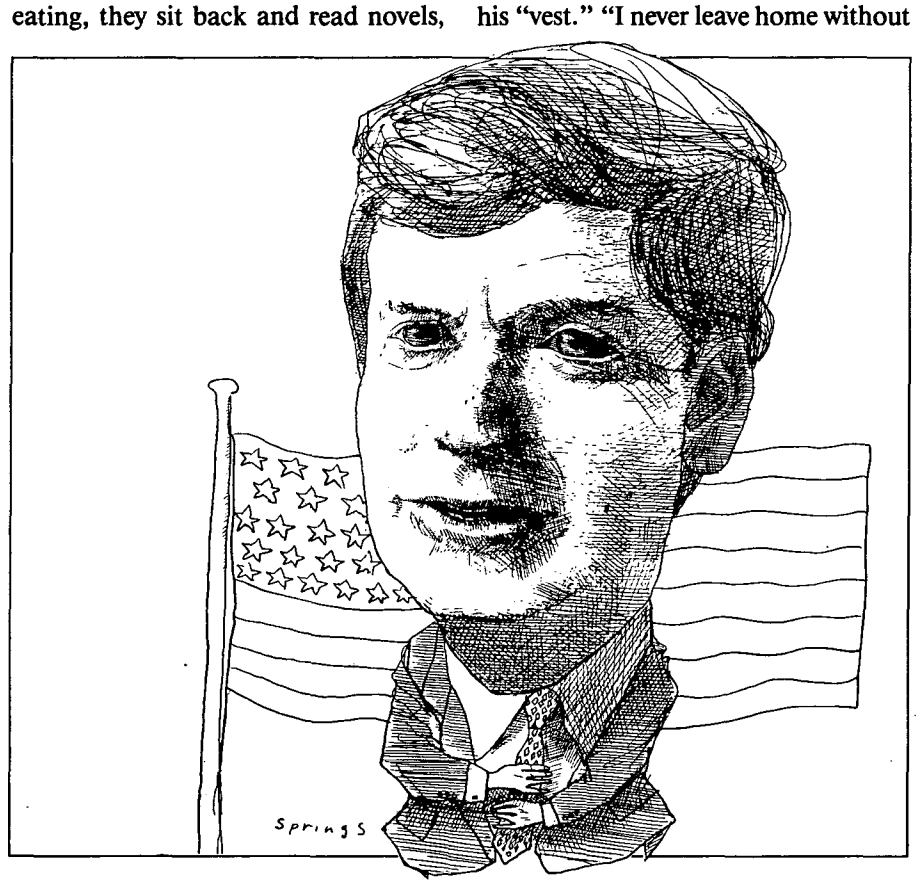
The capital letters are perhaps a warning not to expect much breach of majesty. Quayle remains unseen while boarding (a quick transfer from his marine helicopter) and throughout the flight.

The press corps accompanying him today is small but disproportionately high-powered. The CNN White House correspondent, Charles Bierbauer, is along, and so is the *Washington Post*'s David Broder, who is alternating coverage of Quayle with Bob Woodward for a jointly written series. A White House adviser is described in the morning papers as urging the Vice President to watch out for these two "rabid skunks." Broder, in fact, could hardly be more pleasant and gentlemanly—not one Quayle joke will escape his lips today.

The absence of chief of staff Bill Kristol and press secretary Dave Beckwith, whose daughter had a nasty accident yesterday, leaves a group of junior staffers in charge. In fact, Don Sundquist, the Republican congressman whose district we'll be in, seems like an acting chief of staff. Back in the Distinguished Visitors Lounge at Andrews, he'd explained that he's "been trying to get [Quayle] to come down since January." And then the congressman's thoughts turned to redistricting, how Annunzio of Illinois will probably lose his seat, while "Rosty" survives. It's an obsession beyond fundraising, of course; if you'd passed by Sundquist just before boarding, you'd have heard him explaining to someone else: "If I keep Dickson . . ."

Breakfast on Air Force Two, far above the airlines' average, consists of French toast and Canadian bacon served with glass salt-and-pepper shakers and cloth napkins. The press are billed for it along with the coach fare they pay, but each Secret Service member pays $5.10 in cash, the collection of which is a regulatory comedy, Peter paying Paul at 31,000 feet. When the agents are through eating, they sit back and read novels, *Runner's World*, and their instructions for the day: NO LONG GUNS will be used on this trip, perhaps because the MEMPHIS POLICE WILL PROVIDE HIGH GROUND OBSERVATION. It appears that the afternoon will be trickiest: "VP Participation in the Golf Event has been publicized and large galleries are expected."

Photos of Dan alone, Dan with George, and Dan with Marilyn hang at the front of the main cabin and in the space beyond, in and out of which staff members come and go, greeting the press ("Glad y'all are with us"), answering questions, and bustling about with film canisters and a shopping bag full of presents. When the plane touches down at 10:00 Memphis time, there is still no sign of Quayle, but his golf clubs, protected by blue cozies with the vice presidential seal, come up the aisle and deplane from the rear. One agent remarks on how hot it's going to be outside, and asks another if he's wearing his "vest." "I never leave home without it" is the response, made during a week when Ronald Reagan is phone-lobbying on behalf of the Brady bill.



Under a hot sun, Dan Quayle descends into the city of the two Kings—MLK, Jr. and Elvis. If he were a base-broadener, he might, instead of golfing and speaking at a synagogue, spend some of the day at Graceland, or at the Lorraine Motel, which next week becomes the National Civil Rights Museum. But he has no special gusto for odd venues and lions' dens. After three years of being battered by the press and stagnant in the polls, he seems to seek the familiar, to want to have his wounds licked by friendly elephants. He is shorter than you expect, and curiously sexless for somebody so handsome. Though wrinkled around the eyes, he sustains the appearance of extreme youthfulness through a carriage that borders on the apologetic. Before getting into a Cadillac, he shakes hands with local officials and some party faithful, as well as the fire chief of Leningrad (sic), who's in town for a conference.

The motorcade moves along the Martin Luther King Expressway, which has been cleared of traffic, making its way toward Danny Thomas Boulevard and on to the immense St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, founded by the entertainer in 1962 and since then expanded to formidable proportions. The Vice President will spend fifteen minutes touring the facilities; this afternoon's golf tournament, an annual fundraiser for the hospital, will claim him for several hours.

He is scheduled to chat with some patients in the Medicine Room after coming through a doorway near a plaque bearing a poem about a boy who died of leukemia. The children who have been assembled for his visit this morning evince a cheer and calm that belies their distressed physical appearance. Bloated or thinned from cancer, and bald from chemotherapy, some of them

Thomas Mallon's latest book is Aurora 7 *(Ticknor & Fields).*

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would be of indeterminate sex and age did the hospital not hand out a list with their names, ages, and illnesses. Their mothers sit close by, among them Eric Rushing's, an attractive blonde who holds her five-year-old son, his head distorted by a brain tumor, on her lap; every so often she gives him a quick, happy kiss.

Some young nurses near a wall decline one mother's humorous urging that they come closer to the center of things. "This is where we stand every time," one of them says. "This is my spot." The seated mother jokes about the "patient-nurse interaction" that's missing. Owing its life to celebrity, this extraordinary hospital, named for the patron saint of hopeless causes, is accustomed to and canny about it. The President was here late in 1989, and Mrs. Bush just weeks ago. When asked if any Democrats ever stop by, a hospital spokeswoman says, "That's a good question, actually."

Actually, here comes one now. Phil Donahue, married to Danny Thomas's daughter, Marlo, has just entered the room with his brother-in-law, Tony Thomas, and the Vice President, who says a few words and then makes a progress past the children and mothers. Eric Rushing, whose condition can't help but remind one of the terrifying *Life* magazine photos of Lee Atwater, gives Quayle a "shot" with a toy hypodermic and then tenderly applies a Band-Aid to the vice presidential hand. As he goes around the room, Quayle is gentle and stiff, appealingly so, with the children, quite good in a set of circumstances that, for all their choreography, are straining the emotions of some of the press in the room. He talks to a boy (a look at the handout shows he's really 23) from Angola, Indiana: Craig Dunlap is a bone-cancer patient whose right leg has been amputated above the knee. Quayle tells him about the times he's been in Angola for its Fourth of July parade. When introduced to Steven Knoll ("sarcoma—stable disease") from Stuttgart, Arkansas, he recognizes the town as a rice-producing center and jokes that he'll tell George Bush, who's meeting soon with Prime Minister Kaifu, to urge the Japanese leader to raise import quotas for rice. He carries this one off with an impressive charm; it lightens the atmosphere and seems to please even the media, who largely ignored Quayle's recent trade trip to Japan.

A "press availability" will follow in the Board Room upstairs. On the way to it, Phil Donahue, who shows some surprising low-key charm of his own, attracts autograph seekers, and you hear one woman, a patient's mother perhaps, someone with too much stake in this place to be starstruck in any but a purposeful way, say to him, simply: "Keep up the good work of your father-in-law."

Upstairs the press have little to ask, and Quayle has little to say. He tells the story of Eric and the Band-Aid, holding up his hand for the cameras. He mentions his wife's work against breast cancer, drawing a distinction between priorities in that field (early detection) and what's vital for patients at St. Jude's (aggressive treatment). Appearing reasonably briefed about the hospital, he plugs the golf tournament that's being held for it this afternoon, and then he moves over to shake some hands, thereby permitting a closer view of his face (more sunburnt-Irish than WASP-pink) and three plaques on the Board Room wall, which offer proof that the energetic directors of St. Jude's indeed know how to get along with Democrats: flanking one that commemorates a research fellowship endowed in honor of John Sununu are two others bearing the names of George Mitchell and Richard Gephardt.

"Let's hustle!" says the advance man, the scold in charge of press van number two. (Norma Greenaway, my new friend from Southam News of Canada, tells me I should experience

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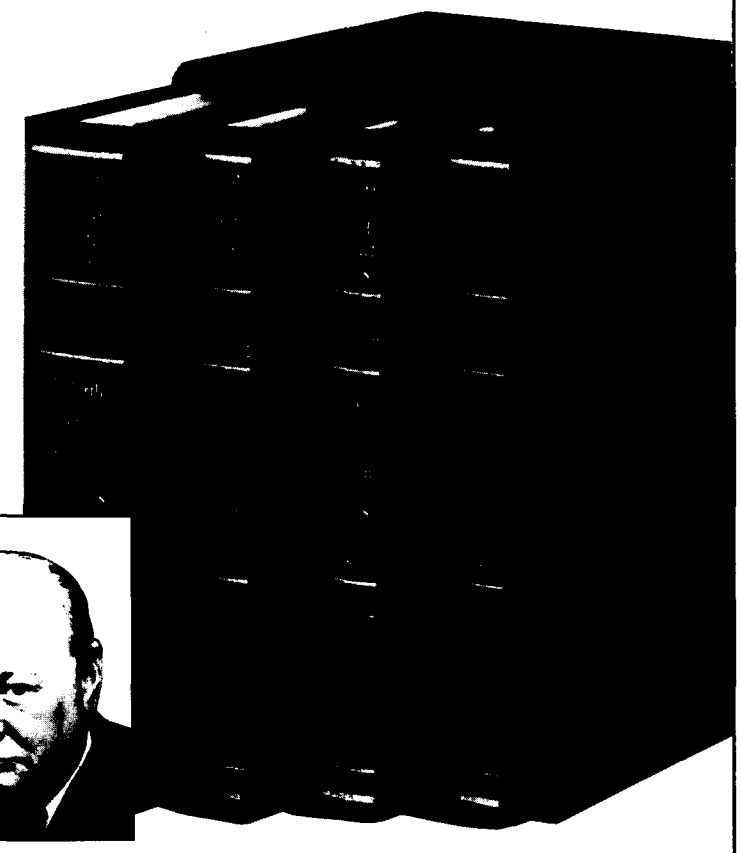

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Kennebunkport in the summer: that's where they *really* treat you badly.) The motorcade makes a long, trafficless way across town, passing down prosperous streets like Walnut Grove, a few of whose suburban gentry are curious enough to come out on the lawns of their ranch houses, and finally onto the grounds of the Racquet Club. "Yeah," says a reporter, "this looks like Danny's kind of place, doesn't it?"

The promise of Quayle has sold three hundred tickets to the Shelby County Republicans' $100-a-plate luncheon. The all-white crowd is abuzz with good-natured excitement at numbered tables topped with two red roses and glasses of iced tea. The press sets up in back, and in a corner just behind them the dress-whited officer carrying what appears to be the standby nuclear "football" takes up an inconspicuous position.

"Do you think Dan Quayle needs a patron saint of hopeless causes?" Norma asks me just before he enters. If the country were composed of nothing but Shelby County Republicans, you'd have to give her a no. The ovation is warm and standing. Still, it's generated not by any imminent ecstasy, any prospect of going limp in a bath of charisma, but rather by the call of duty, a rare opportunity for audience participation; those applauding are ready to *help* this poor man against all those bastards at the back of the room.

The invocation by Dr. Maxie Dunnam, Senior Minister of the Christ United Methodist Church, seems to prove that God has moved on from co-piloting and super-salesmanship into something like middle management: "Forgive us," asks Dr. Dunnam, "when we don't make You a factor in our political equations." Congressman Sundquist's introduction of Quayle refers to the way he's "weathered a barrage of criticism and too often an unfair press," and challenges the perpetrators of his image to disseminate the "sensitive, caring and thoughtful" Quayle that was on display in the Medicine Room of St. Jude's: "I hope it's captured on film, and that it will be shown on national TV tonight. . . ." That, of course, is the only way the event will have any political reality, and when on Friday night some seconds of it show up on CNN, Sundquist may feel he's accomplished his mission. For the present, however, he seems to succeed only in encouraging Quayle to drain the humanity from those few minutes back at the hospital. After the Vice President has taken the podium to another standing ovation, made an Elvis joke and an obligatory reference to Tennessee's Andrew Jackson ("the media gave *him* a hard time"), it is time once more to bring out the story of Eric and the Band-Aid, one of those "moments that you will never forget." This time the moment isn't so much retold as retailed, complete with a little Reaganesque lump in the throat. The crowd sighs appreciatively. I guess you had to not be there.

This is all warm-up to a pre-election pep talk, and throughout his preamble Quayle adopts a somewhat maddening little-boy persona; it's as if he longs for the protectiveness and reassurance the crowd is happy to give him. They will *get him through this*, the way you nod encouragement to the kid in the pageant as he tries to recall his lines. The sheer cooperativeness of the crowd is, finally, less indicative of political affinity than low expectations. They laugh more lustily, applaud more heartily, and sigh more feelingly than even an inherently gung-ho occasion like this requires.

CNN's Charles Bierbauer is along, and so is the *Washington Post*'s David Broder, who is alternating coverage of Quayle with Bob Woodward for a jointly written series. A White House adviser is described in the morning papers as urging the Vice President to watch out for these two "rabid skunks."

The main part of the speech involves, naturally enough, throwing red meat to the converted, and as such it's not bad; Quayle has been extraordinarily successful raising funds for the party all across the country. His rhetorical style has some oddities—rather as Jimmy Carter used to pause in the oddest places, the Vice President sometimes alternates shouts and murmurs with little correlation to his text—but he makes his points with sound-bitten economy. Despite what the Democrats say, George Bush *does* have a domestic agenda:

> What they mean is that this President doesn't have *their* domestic agenda. We know what their agenda is: higher taxes, more spending, socialized medicine, more governmental regulation. Well, that's *their* agenda. Let me tell you what *our* agenda is: growth, low taxes, strong national defense, *true* equality of opportunity, *real* reform in education—and that means giving the parents the right to choose where their kids go to school!

Republicans are also the party of "public safety," apparently the new term for law and order. "I can't wait for this campaign to begin!" Quayle says, a prospect so dreary that even these good Republicans of Shelby County can't bring themselves to applaud it. But they clap mightily when he's through, even though the luncheon's guest of honor isn't staying for lunch. There's no time for that. The motorcade is pulling out toward the next event, the principal one of the day; as the advance man (a more pleasant one this time) informs the occupants of press van number two: "We're gonna go right to the first tee."

On our way to the Tournament Players Club for the Federal Express St. Jude Classic Celebrity Pro-Am, there are speculative jokes about the show-and-tell Band-Aid, about whether it was a replacement and whether he'll still have it on tonight. Bierbauer wiggles his hand to indicate "so so" when asked by somebody if he thought the now legendary hypodermic shot was really such a good photo op. No matter: it's the image of the day, and you can already picture the generic Democrat who will be rounded up to respond to Quayle's luncheon message on the six o'clock news: "Well, Brad/Heather, that's unfortunately typical of the Republicans' approach to social problems: just put a Band-Aid over them . . ."

At 1:45 there's a crowd behind the first tee, as the touring pros, along with the local philanthropists and big deals who get to golf with them, continue to be introduced. Tony Thomas and Phil Donahue ("Danny's son-in-law") emerge from the clubhouse, and the latter again shows a non-hammy charm by saying only "He's so much thinner in person" into the microphone. The crowd enjoys this imitation of itself, but its display of good feeling doesn't extend to those who've come to cover Quayle. "Down in front, media! We had to pay; they didn't!" is the cry you hear before kneeling down to grass-stain your pants. After Quayle comes out to another standing ovation, it's clear that these spectators have more than visibility and value on their minds. They know why the press is here—to hurt Dan—and from behind the ropes they try to practice the same sort of protective dandling the luncheon audience did. "He looks *fine*. Leave his checkered pants alone," says somebody to a reporter who's asked the most innocent question imaginable—namely, why Quayle isn't wearing the checkered golf pants that Craig, one of the patients in the hospital this morning, had inquired about. "That's only inside my own congressional district," Quayle banters back to the questioner. "I would never wear them outside Indiana." "Who's the better golfer? You or your boss?" DQ: "There are some questions I will not answer. That is one of them." He spots Broder, now in shirtsleeves, and says, "David, you look like you belong out here." He's no Jack Kennedy at this sort of exchange, but he's no Nixon either. In fact, the only thing undercutting the perfectly adequate ease he demonstrates is a genuine eagerness to start golfing. He's already made his remarks boosting St. Jude's and paid tribute to Danny Thomas in the same verbless phrases Bush would ("Danny Thomas: talented" but "most important: caring"), and he'd like to be heading toward the fairway now.

He'll be golfing with Ben Crenshaw, who gets as big a hand as Quayle before teeing off. Finally, it's the Vice President's turn. The emcee notes that Quayle is the only amateur with the courage to go off the pro tee, and the Veep responds, "We'll find out if it's courage or stupidity in one minute," a line no one would touch with a nine-iron. When the minute comes, it proves to have been neither courage nor stupidity—just perfectly earned confidence. The tee shot he makes is a fabulous display of grace and strength, even better than Crenshaw's, and the smile he flashes is the expression of a man who, probably for the first time today, has gotten to be himself.

He's at it for fourteen holes, four hours in the hot sun, until it's time for the last public event of the day, a speech at Memphis's enormous Baron Hirsch Synagogue. In the manner of the President coming in to address a Joint Session of Congress, Quayle receives two standing ovations before uttering a word. Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman (who from a distance bears an amusing resemblance to John Sununu) talks of how the congregants have come to love Quayle, and, despite any lingering tendencies to vote Democratic, it's clear that those assembled in this huge and beautiful building regard him as their man—at least on one issue—even more possessively than the Shelby County Republicans.

Audience protectiveness is once again the order of the day. (Before the press departs, one member of the congregation will enjoy the chance to buttonhole Charles Bierbauer about the fourth estate's sins against Quayle.) One wonders for a moment if the crowd's eagerness to be of help won't in fact be needed when Quayle, describing his recent (and, in truth, undercovered) travels, refers, rather oddly, to the "opportunity" he had to represent President Bush at Rajiv Gandhi's funeral. But he is soon hitting his stride, even with those needless alternations in volume, comparing the

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children of St. Jude's to Israel herself (they're both fighters) and recounting his visit to Auschwitz with his wife and two of their children. He decries bigotry and hate crimes ("In this new world order there is no room for persecution") and brings on joyful applause by mentioning America's assistance in the recent rescue of Ethiopian Jews. His single specific Middle-East proposal is the repeal of U.N. resolution 3379, the one equating Zionism and racism. He finishes to a third standing ovation, bringing the day's total to six.

Rabbi Grossman, a longtime activist on behalf of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, has obviously kept his congregation at a high level of political awareness, and in thanking the Vice President, he seems to be trying to dispel any suspicions of expediency: "What you said is what you are. . . . I know as a personal fact that you meant every word of it." As the rabbi explains what the Torah is and presents him with a Bible, Quayle stands beside him like a student on prize day.

Part of the inscription in the Bible reads: "Your leadership has ennobled our nation and the human race." This may be laying it on thick, but by now the mutual-admiration stakes have piled up uncontrollably. A moment before, Rabbi Grossman observed unblushingly that what Quayle said "took great courage." Actually, despite the occasionally courageous speechmaking Quayle undertakes (outlining the moral case for U.S. involvement in the Gulf, for example, or speaking out against aid to the Soviets), this particular talk is what one of the older boys on the bus says they used to call a "giant pander," even less nuanced than something Hubert Humphrey might have uttered under similar circumstances.

When talking, like Lloyd Bentsen, about politicians Quayle fails to resemble, perhaps most relevant of all is that he is no Spiro Agnew, a man who after a year in office went in the media-made public mind from being a buffoon to a junkyard dog, at considerable (if short-lived) political profit. But as Quayle leaves to standing ovation No. 4, and heads toward the airport, you have to wonder if, by coming to love him, the congregation has given him only what he came to it *for*.

No one on Air Force Two bothers you with instructions about life jackets and oxygen masks. They don't even tell passengers to take their seats until after the plane has begun taxiing toward the runway. There's a cocktail-party feeling in the aisle as we get ready to head back toward Washington: agents, staff, and press examine Graceland souvenirs and pass along the good news that Dave Beckwith's daughter has successfully come through five hours of surgery on her arm. (The day's other medical news is less pressing, though not irrelevant to the vice presidency: the exhumation of Zachary Taylor has yielded no evidence of arsenic poisoning and Millard Fillmore, who'd been mentioned as a possible conspirator, is in the clear.)

After quite a good dinner ($6.25 for Secret Service), the four traveling press are invited to make their way to Quayle's workspace at the very front of the plane. This will be their first really close-up encounter with him, and after filing past souvenirs (a Gorbachev portrait from the Leningrad fire chief) and leftover briefing materials (Danny Thomas's autobiography), they reach the Vice President's noisy frontal sanctum. Quayle says hello and offers sticks of sugarless gum all around—an appealing if not exactly awe-inspiring introduction.

As he goes around the room, Quayle is gentle and stiff, appealingly so, with the children, quite good in a set of circumstances that are straining the emotions of the press in the room.

He is not relaxed, and you can hardly blame him. It will soon be midnight; the jet noise is formidable; his golf game was not, in the end, so hot; and the reporters sitting with him have just covered his table-top with their portable tape recorders. Despite the gum-chewing, the intimacy of the setting, and the lack of cameras, this encounter is hardly informal; while not on the fourteen-page schedule, it has figured into the day's planning as definitely as the visit to the Medicine Room or the synagogue. Congressman Sundquist sits at Quayle's right elbow, and both are fully aware of what sort of people they've just let in.

A number of the questions are pointedly unpleasant. How often does he golf? (Only three or four times a month—and this is the first PGA event he's had a chance to participate in as Vice President.) What happened to the Band-Aid? (It came off around the fourth hole.) How much can he really get out of a ten-minute tour of a hospital? (Don't forget all he learns from the briefings beforehand.) The responses are courteous, wary, and generally nimble. One finds a lot more life behind the eyes than when he's being thrust in front of friendly audiences. He acts his age and has, at last, a normal physical presence; you notice that his hands are even prematurely wrinkled.

With some pardonable weak spots, he is perfectly well-informed. You sense he's faking knowledge of the Quebec situation when Norma Greenaway brings it up, but when asked about his own trips to Israel, he precisely recalls their dates, their purposes, and the people who accompanied him. Pressed for his reaction to the Rockefeller report, he says, "Which one? Health care or children?" and is ready with responses for both (increasing parental tax deductions might be better than tax credits). And when the "conversation" turns to the recent space-station vote in the House, he displays a relish for the victory he helped put together, even though he had to do some of his arm-twisting on the phone from Eastern Europe: "The space station survived with a considerable margin. . . . If they take another run at us later on this year or next year, we'll be prepared."

He tells Charles Bierbauer that he always likes to get out of Washington, but when the lights of the city come into view, he breaks into a smile and looks toward them like a tourist who's been alerted to the presence of the Grand Canyon beneath the left side of the aircraft. This little ordeal, which he'll politely deem "a pleasure as always," is just about over, and the announcement that the press will have to return to their seats for landing is probably the best thing that's happened since his shot on the first tee. As you leave this lifelike, competent man, you know for sure what you'd already guessed: the idea that the Republic should shiver with anxiety at the prospect of his taking over has been ridiculously oversold. That the country could do better than Dan Quayle is not news; that Dan Quayle himself can do better—as he's just done—still is.

Yet it doesn't fill one with new admiration for him. If anything, the display of ability generates a different sort of disappointment, annoyance over the way he permits himself to remain, in public, a controlled substance, a sweet, miniature creature in a Republican petting zoo. This may be what, to some extent, the White House wants and the office demands. But it is so contrary to Quayle's own long-term political interests that one has to wonder if there isn't a psychological motivation as well. After what he's been through the last three years, would he rather tend to his own wounds than inflict some on others? If he has little chance of being elected President, is it because at some point he became an object of pity to himself? Perhaps it became just too much to do, at least in public, what number two is always supposed to do—try harder.

A week later Dan Quayle will be back home in Indiana, the mother of Vice Presidents, for a July 4 visit to his hometown of Huntington. Waiting to board the plane that will carry the whole Quayle family there, you wonder if the day will provide him with any unexpected chances to emerge from the plastic chrysalis in which he is wrapped.

The only other reporter aboard this morning is Bob Woodward, whose presence apparently frees David Broder for a holiday barbecue. Red-bearded Dave Beckwith, the press secretary, is along, too, saying he's pleased with *The American Spectator*'s July article on the weird disparity between Quayle's press as a senator and what he's suffered since—though he thinks coverage has improved of late. (Quayle himself seems disinclined to take up the subject. When I

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ask him later if he's satisfied with the press he's getting, he jokes: "It's never good enough.")

There are no golf clubs for the stewards to take off the plane today, but there are seven cartons of personal effects including the nominating petitions from Quayle's 1986 Senate race, that have been brought along to join the Quayle Memorabilia now being exhibited in the Huntington City-Township Public Library by The Dan Quayle Commemorative Foundation, Inc. The exhibit has been HELD OVER, according to the sign outside, and after a brief motorcade from the Fort Wayne airport into Huntington, past cornfields, muffler shops, and frame houses, it's our first stop.

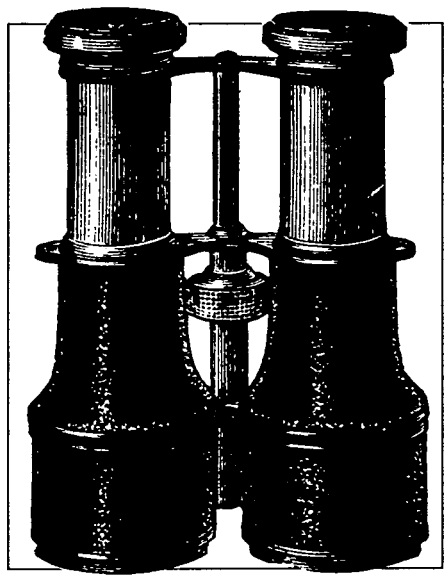
"Oh, no, the Follies!" says Mrs. Quayle, spotting a program from an old Kappa Kappa Kappa sorority show—not far from the Vice President's law-school diploma, out of which the family dog took a bite. "Tucker, look!" says Ben Quayle to his older brother, when he comes upon something of special interest in the display cases containing such items as their parents' wedding announcement and Dad's old sweatshirt. Photos from the 1980 Senate campaign show a Quayle so peach-fuzzy and tousled that he'd be more believable wearing a paisley shirt and singing a Donovan song than—it's even harder to believe now—doing what he was doing back then: killing off Birch Bayh.

The Quayles enjoy this curated attic enough to throw off the schedule a bit. (As they linger inside the exhibit room, the librarian runs to get copies of *The Brethren* and *The Final Days* for Woodward to autograph; all copies of *The Commanders*, she tells him, are out.) Quayle at last emerges to a press availability across the street, near Wilson Realty, where a sign welcomes him home and thanks him for saving the Patriot missile. A local reporter calls him "Dan" and asks how it felt to see his old Little League shirt. "We were having a little debate," replies the Vice President, "on what year I played for the Kiwanis team . . ." There's really no way he could "open up" an encounter like this one, but back out in the sunlight, here at the corner of West Market and Poplar, he has once more undergone that reverse-photosynthesis, taken on that deathly affable look, that face that someone's described as looking as if it hasn't been lived in. His verbal gaffes (the United Negro College Fund) have gotten more than enough airplay, but you almost wish he'd let loose with a real open-mike blooper on the order of Ronald Reagan ("We begin bombing in five minutes") or radio's Uncle Don ("That should hold the little bastards for a while"): call Albert Gore an s.o.b., or Tom Foley a fool, anything to get some mud on the Little League uniform the national press still has him in, and which he keeps pressing and putting on himself.

Before today it's been eighteen years since Huntington had a Fourth of July parade, but Dan Quayle's return is such a regional draw that nearby New Haven has cancelled its own festivities this year. The parade's staging area is the parking lot of Huntington North High School, where '55 Fords take their places as antique cars, and politically incorrect kids dressed as Indians mount their horses. It's an appealingly corny spectacle, and one local reporter orients an out-of-towner with a list of surprising hometown attributes: "All three networks! And indoor plumbing!"

After what he's been through in the last three years, would he rather tend to his own wounds than inflict some on others?

The press ride, standing up, in a pickup truck, just ahead of the Quayles, in a position to keep cameras trained on them every step of the way. The family marches five abreast, glowing with good looks and health, and of course way too wholesome ever to pass muster with the arbiters of glamour. "We appreciate you!" someone calls out from the curb, and as the crowds thicken along the route leading to the center of town, the applause and cries of encouragement reach a critical mass of heartiness. "Hey, Danny Quayle!" "GO for it!" "There's our man!" Signs appear: WE THE QUAYLES and, rather curiously, BUSH WON'T FAIL QUAYLE—the vice presidential name separated in a way that leaves one unsure if it's meant as a direct object of the three other words.



Long ago, Jacqueline Kennedy was heard to say that if you bungle raising your children, whatever else you do won't matter very much. Years from now, whether it's the White House or Huntington that lies beyond the storm of ridicule they're still walking through, one suspects that Dan and Marilyn Quayle will find reason to be satisfied with the way they've brought up their daughter and two sons. The children walking with them are impressively modest: they won't wave to the crowds, not out of sullenness, but from a clearly instilled sense that all this is not because of *them*—even though Tucker, a sort of returning New Kid on the Block, is in possession of some sign-carrying female fans of his own. (His big star trip today consists, on the way home, of going back to the galley of Air Force Two for an extra piece of pie.) There's an attractive easiness between these parents and their kids: chatter, laughter, physical nudges and hugs, none of it canned, and all of it, one has to remind oneself, more important than having the esteem of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Or, of course, Dan Rather: CBS GO HOME. AMERICANS BEWARE OF THE NATIONAL NEWS MEDIA, says a placard held by one grim-faced Huntington elder. Indeed, the parade is a sort of double celebration for those returning from combat in foreign territory. As one big sign on a housefront declares: WELCOME HOME V. P. DAN QUAYLE & FAMILY. WELCOME HOME TROOPS. The day's main event, after the parade, will be the unveiling of a plaque at the courthouse where, on August 19, 1988, Dan Quayle began his campaign and the citzens of Huntington memorably jeered the media that had been eviscerating its native son. "There's the famous courthouse," Dave Beckwith tells Woodward as we come in sight of it, near the railroad crossing and Finney's Corner Tavern. "We'll throw a few things to make you feel at home," says another aide.

"A few weeks ago," Quayle tells the crowd below the steps, "my staff came to me and said, 'We have a special Fourth of July prepared for you and your family. . . . You're gonna be with people who are smart, who have common sense, and the same values that you do.' I knew at that moment I was gettin' the heck out of Washington, D.C.!" The Huntingtonians love it, and they listen applaudingly as their man protests "historical revisionism" (the kind that would knock those paleface Indians off their horses); extols other local heroes like the early astronaut Gus Grissom (even though the air base named for him is on the hit list for closing); and talks up a new exemplar of the American dream, Clarence Thomas, a name this all-white crowd already seems to recognize as one the uncommonsensical people of Washington will be out to destroy. After the speech is over, and the brass band has played, and the plaque has seen the bright light of day, the Vice President walks across the street to pay an unexpected visit to the offices of the *Huntington Herald-Press* (est. 1848), where, almost twenty years ago, J. Danforth Quayle worked, for a short time, as a member of the press.

On the way home it's clear that the trip has done him good, though whether it's the kind of good he really needs—more stroking by the faithful—is open to question. What's indisputable is how much more relaxed with the press he is on this plane ride than on the one home from Memphis—even though half of today's press consists of Bob Woodward, a man who can banish Presidents and raise CIA chiefs from the dead. He and Woodward seem to like each other, and Quayle is confident and joshing in his presence, entertaining him with an ambiguous, off-the-record review of *The Commanders*, which he's just finished.

Once again Quayle displays a confident command of information on everything from Saddam Hussein's remaining warmaking capability to Clarence Thomas's prospects: he suspects the nomination will turn on abortion and feels sure that Thomas's spoken admiration of Lewis Lehrman's *American Spectator* article on natural law does not constitute definitive opposition to *Roe* v. *Wade*. He disputes the charge in a recent *New Republic* piece that NASA has him "on a leash," and says that from his point of view the "Livermore plan" to get to Mars on the cheap with inflatable modules is "absolutely" still alive and worthy of consideration. (Why not ask George Bush if he could go out and give a speech on its behalf?)

His half-hour performance is better than some of the ones his boss puts on, either behind a White House podium or at 30,000 feet. And yet it remains so at odds with his public image that you can't help but think of the "Saturday Night Live" sketch in which Ronald Reagan leaves a goofball photo op for a closed-doors meeting with advisers, at which he turns into a Metternichean wizard. The disparity in Quayle's case is hardly so vast or comical, but it remains wide, not only because of the media's investment in the caricature they have drawn, but also from the Vice President's apparent unwillingness to defy the enjoined docility of his office, to cut back on friendly fundraising and disprove the image, dramatically, in more unlikely, ruleless arenas. The real story, still waiting to come out, is that Dan Quayle is no Dan Quayle. □

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

RESPONSES TO FRUM'S BUCHANAN

David Frum's piece trashing Pat Buchanan ("The Conservative Bully Boy," *TAS*, July 1991) smells more like the "Israel über alles" lobby trying to avenge perceived anti-Israel and pro-U.S. statements Pat Buchanan made in some of his columns. When are the David Frums and Abe Rosenthals of this great country going to realize that the country of Israel is not a part of the USA and each country's political policies sometimes differ? It's quite obvious on which side the David Frums will be on if they do.

—Frank MacGeehan
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

If you don't get Pat Buchanan's permission to name him as a rape victim, you are no better than the *New York Times* (see Terry Eastland's Presswatch column "Against Her Will" in the July 1991 *TAS*).

—Don Nemetz
Seaside, Oregon

Alexander Pope settled the score with his enemies by portraying them as soiling themselves in their own excrement, frolicking in sewer slime, and vomiting and urinating on one another. I thought of the *Dunciad* in reading the July *TAS* and considered Pope Mr. Niceguy compared to David Frum in his treatment of Pat Buchanan. What *TAS* published is not an article, but the tantrum of a man-brat for which he should be sent to his room without brie.

Where did you find this *précieux*? Buchanan is . . . gulp . . . "uncandid" Frum tells us repeatedly. Does Frum also become unwell and get the vapors at the prospect of that brute, Buchanan? Quick, a scented handkerchief for Mr. Frum for having to write about the person all "couth conservatives want to escape."

Can you give readers some help in recognizing couth? I read things like "Why Danny Can't Read" in *TAS*, and P. J. O'Rourke describing the bug-like procreation of Third Worlders and Martin Luther King "Bidenizing" his doctoral thesis. I am confused. Were these couth or has *TAS* become a conservative Monsieur Jourdain? While you're at it, can you tell me why ostracizing a journalist like Buchanan is different from universities branding outspoken professors as politically incorrect, and why you don't turn yourself in to your own 800 thought police number?

Frum's article gives muckraking a bad name. According to Frum, Buchanan writes for "a local (NYC) tabloid," not a newspaper; he doesn't opine, he "snarls"; he doesn't question, he is "suspicious of economic activity he doesn't understand"; he doesn't express concern, he "frets"; he doesn't engage opponents, he "stomps them"; he doesn't even make honest mistakes, his mistakes are "kookery." . . .

Frum tells us Buchanan is against civil rights and sighs: "What decent person is against civil rights?" That's what rhetoric teachers call begging the question and honest people call desperation, as when Ron Brown accuses President Bush of embracing the politics of David Duke by opposing the Democrats' civil rights bill.

Frum's charge of Buchanan's racism belongs in a real tabloid like the *Sun* of London, if they would throw away their standards to print it. Frum's case is a 1970 notation by John Ehrlichman, quoted in a 1991 book, and purporting to give President Nixon's opinion that Buchanan was a segregationist. The correctness of the assertion is established to Frum's satisfaction because in 1990 Buchanan supported Arizona's right to decide at the polls not to have a Martin Luther King holiday. If the best evidence Frum can come up with, in a life as public as Buchanan's, is a 21-year-old self-serving triple-hearsay uncorroborated statement by a convicted felon, of another's opinion, he is really saying there is no evidence. . . .

An even more bewildering argument is Frum's accusation that Buchanan is a coward for failing to take on that dreadnaught of neoconservative right think, the Heritage Foundation, while pummeling individual neocons like "poor old Norman Podhoretz." From what I've read by Norman Podhoretz, he's no 98-lb. weakling but a pretty formidable opponent. More to the point, silence or the failure to oppose allows a presumption of agreement if it allows a presumption of anything. The only inference that can be drawn from Buchanan's failure to criticize Heritage is like that old Henny Youngman joke: up to now everything's been OK. . . .

Finally, I confess to awe at Frum's special ability to know just where Buchanan's kind of conservatism shades in "Kook-land." He really can't explain how they are able to do it, but he and others in the Frum brotherhood "know where it is." More than that, without Tarot cards or other paraphernalia, Frum is able to tell us just what goes on in the mind of someone like Pat Buchanan as he makes the trek from respectability to inhabitant of "Kook-land." I had associated the ability to delve into another's secret thoughts with Latin American fiction writers like Julio Cortazar and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Make room for the gringo, *muchachos*.

Mike Tyson went on television recently to call Razor Ruddock a transvestite who secretly longs for him. *TAS* seems to think that what promotes fights for Don King will work for *TAS*. The Frum article may provoke a response from Buchanan, but I doubt it. He's too bright, too decent a man, to inquinate himself by mixing it up with a slubbergullion like Frum.

—Frank Ruddy
Chevy Chase, Maryland

Three cheers for David Frum. He is certainly correct that Pat Buchanan is an embarrassment to many of us who feel we are fine conservatives politically, but don't share his dislike for Israel and Jews, his idea that only Communism is a menace to freedom, and his nerdy attitudes toward non-whites.

Pat Buchanan's appointment as the chatterbox on the right on Ted Turner's CNN "Crossfire" has made him the most conspicuous conservative in America. Apparently this has gone to his head. He is now infallible on politics and religion, and leading a virtual one-man campaign to restore the Latin Mass to the Catholic Church. (Does any Catholic know another who wants to return to the Latin Mass?) Buchanan's desire to excommunicate the neoconservatives is as risible a scheme as his Latin Mass project. In both cases he shows he's lost touch with those whom he claims he represents, and is really only Ted Turner's caricature of a conservative. Conservatism in America today is more diverse than Pat likes, and conservatives have enough wrinkles in their gray matter to ignore him.

—Chuck Fowler
Bellemont, Arizona

Bull's Eye on Buchanan! David Frum has accurately detailed my feelings about Pat's direction in the conservative "movement." His feelings about the Desert Shield/Storm operations left me pretty much bereft of respect for his insight, and I have ever since viewed him as an anachronous pundit totally lacking in real ideas for positive conservative change in America.

The article missed citing, however, a very telling example of Buchanan's inconsistency in his isolationist views. In one of his newsletters from last summer, Pat mapped out how the U.S. would (and should, in Pat's view) absorb the soon to be fragmented provinces of Canada, due to the failure of the Meech Lake Accords. In his giddy plan, we would finally achieve our "manifest destiny" by controlling almost all of North America. . . .

I have since discontinued my subscription to *PJB/FTR* and extended my subscriptions to *National Review* and, of course, *TAS*. Your views give me more comfort and confidence in the conservative movement. Pat has become just plain scary.

—Daniel Herchenroether
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Given that Pat Buchanan has been thumping the neoconservatives severely lately in his columns, accusing them of being New Deal liberals who merely opportunistically posture as conservatives, I am not surprised by David Frum's biting polemical response. But Frum's sophomoric overheated rhetoric and

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baseless accusations thoroughly enervate his position.

As one who has read and admired Buchanan for years, I do not believe that his defense of traditional norms, rooted communities, and the minimal state can be dismissed so facilely as mere racist nativism. Frum apparently prefers to be vitriolic rather than analytical here to distract the reader from the real issues at stake in the current neoconservative/paleoconservative debate. What I was looking for was a balanced analysis of the conflicting views of these two warring camps on such defining issues as egalitarianism, democratic capitalism, global democracy, and the welfare state. What I find instead is the accusation that anyone who does not lock-step with the neoconservatives on these issues is in "kook-land." Have the neoconservatives now become the final arbiters of the defining principles of genuine conservatism? By redefining conservatism along neoconservative lines, Frum has in a self-serving manner effectively marginalized and dismissed from the conservative fold the Old Right, e.g., Buchanan, Russell Kirk, Thomas Fleming, and Paul Gottfried. . . .

—W. Wesley McDonald
Assoc. Prof. of Political Science
Elizabethtown College
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

Mr. Frum's attacks on Pat Buchanan are full of gross distortions and slanderous judgments. As a historian of American conservatism, moreover, I am appalled by his grotesque caricature of American conservative thinking, whether Taft Republican, Southern Agrarian, or aristocratic individualist, before the movement's forced reconstruction by his friends. But since others can address these weightier issues, I shall limit myself to the part of Frum's polemic dealing with my person. There is, alas, nothing "weird" about my accusation against Jerry Z. Muller of the Catholic University of America history department, who cooperated with his chairman Jon Wakelyn and with Frum's mentor from the University of Toronto, Thomas Pangle, to blacken my professional reputation. Frum is correct that a junior prof. could not have pulled it off by himself, but no one is claiming that Muller went after me without assistance. From copious reports there were Marxists and neocons involved in the project, who engaged in such massive overkill that I have now been able to gather damning evidence about the incident. For this investigation I have depended on the cooperation of the recipients of malicious phone calls and on those who were present when they took place.

In none of my relevant comments do I suggest that Norman Podhoretz owns the Catholic Church or, what is even less likely, that the Catholic Church has effective control over Catholic University. My intuition that Podhoretz was in on the hit was initially just that, an intuition, though one based on Muller's close connections with *Commentary*, in which he often publishes politically correct articles. Later on, however, in a published interview with Robert Moynihan of *Thirty Days*, Podhoretz responded to a question about my fate at Catholic University with the revealing statement that "his writings seem more Christian than Jewish." Assuming this was not the kind of judgment that Jacob Neusner offers in comparative studies of Syriac-speaking Jews and Christians in late antiquity, it could only mean that Podhoretz was giving off nasty vibes. And in the context of the interview, his response might have meant more: for example, that he had known and approved of the actions taken against me.

Allow me to comment briefly on another reference that pertains to me directly. Frum and Tyrrell take offense at the figures that I give for neocon philanthropy earmarked for *The American Spectator*. In point of fact the annual haul for the magazine is not half, as they assert, but about a tenth of the amount that I cited. . . .

—Paul Gottfried
Professor of Humanities
Elizabethtown College
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

David Frum makes light of what happened to Dr. Paul Gottfried at The Catholic University of America when its Department of Politics sought to appoint him as a visiting professor. If Mr. Frum had been really interested in the facts of this academic *cause célèbre*, he could have inquired into the roles of various individuals outside and inside the University in blocking Gottfried's appointment. An early effort to create opposition to him involved Jerry Z. Muller from CUA's Department of History. The rather curious allegations made by Muller to at least one University official reviewing Gottfried's appointment are well known. Mr. Frum's cavalier treatment of this entire affair confirms a spreading belief that some who make a big show of battling political correctness on the campus would simply like to replace one form of correctness with another.

—Claes G. Ryn
Professor of Politics
The Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

Let me get this straight. David Frum says that Pat Buchanan is a bully because he would rather pick on Norman Podhoretz than the *Wall Street Journal* or the Heritage Foundation? Well, a man has a right to pick his own enemies. Maybe Buchanan simply finds Podhoretz to be more disagreeable than the latter outfits. Maybe he hopes to win those outfits to his side. Maybe he figures that going toe to toe with the editor of *Commentary* and his friends is enough of a job for one man in one day. And maybe Buchanan is just, as Frum thinks, a sly Jew-baiter who enjoys his work.

Whatever the case, any man who is willing to provoke American Jewry and refuses to back down is no mere bully. He may be a fool, but he's entitled to respect for his guts.

—Steve Roberts
Northridge, California

. . . I find *TAS*'s Buchanan article strikingly similar in form, content, and spirit to a recent essay in *Esquire* attacking P. J. O'Rourke. The author of that particular diatribe, however, had the good taste not to attempt to estimate Mr. O'Rourke's annual salary.

—Layne Littlepage
New York, New York

Though I agree with David Frum as against Pat Buchanan on most of the issues Frum addressed in his July essay, I am still concerned by his harsh tone. The conservative movement has always had its share of disputes, even when it was much smaller than it is today. This is normal for any movement that is creative and dynamic; that is alive intellectually rather than dead. It is a strength if it is used to stimulate thought and refine arguments. It can be destructive, however, if it leads to blood feuds between exclusive schools of thought that claim infallibility.

Fortunately, the movement has not yet formed such rigid schools. Frum talks of "neoconservatives" and "the Rockford crowd" and while there is certainly hostility between some individuals associated with these two sub-groups, there's also a much larger number of us who recognize common themes and can work with both without agreeing entirely with either. The key is to stay receptive to alternative conclusions if based on sound principles and shared core values. It is still quite easy to distinguish those on the right from those on the left if based on the person's total outlook and not just on one or two issues.

The same month that an essay of mine highly critical of the isolationism of Buchanan, some of the Rockford crowd, and other anti-war conservatives appeared in the neoconservative journal the *National Interest*, I also had an article in the Rockford Institute's *Chronicles* critical of increased Third World immigration, a paleocon concern. So what does that make me? Just another activist trying to determine what is in the best long-term interests of the United States. That's the only consistency I want or need. . . .

—William R. Hawkins
President, Hamilton Center
for National Strategy
Knoxville, Tennessee

Shabby-ville is a place that every editor-in-chief has seen. Some editors get to know it better than others. They take more time in reading the long word-proccessed files a little more spitefully. They write back a little more eagerly. And the inhabitants of Shabby-ville have a curious power to anticipate which editors will be friendliest to them. Almost clairvoyantly they detect the concealed sense of unrewarded merit that renders an editor-in-chief susceptible to the Caw of the Shabby.

Normally, successful and well-paid editors are the most immune to shabby journalism. Not Tyrrell. The man's opinions are carried by some newspapers and he makes occasional television appearances, sometimes replacing noted conservatives on talk shows. And still he is a target for Frum's piece in the July *TAS*.

—Richard Weiss
Annapolis, Maryland

Buchanan must be a racist because he thinks it is hypocritical to be deemed a racist if one has difficulty imputing greatness to Martin Luther King, notwithstanding King's flirtation with Communism and his aberrant sexual conduct. . . . Shame on *The American Spectator*.

—Verner J. Trees, Jr.
Missouri City, Texas

Who is this guy David Frum? He sounds like an A. M. Rosenthal clone. Buchanan is "a man with festering grievances," "he snarled," "Buchanan laments," etc. etc. etc. Not one line of legitimate criticism. Who is this crank? Worse yet, what's a weirdo like this doing in a decent magazine? He must have crawled over from the *Nation*.

—Larry T. Killen
San Angelo, Texas

Pat's column, based on the theory that if you "follow the money" some things become explicable, has generated a slew of attacks whose extent and intensity seems disproportionate. From Paul Weyrich and William Rusher all the way down to Lyn Nofziger, columns and letters to the editor have been commissioned to putatively set the record straight.

David Frum's cover story, prominently headlined "The Conservative Bully Boy," is an exquisitely squalid example of a political hit job. . . .

Mr. Frum . . . implicitly and explicitly discounts the continuing moral and geopolitical case for opposing Soviet imperialism and Communist aggression, even as he suggests that Saddam Hussein poses a greater threat to liberty than do the Black Berets, the Red Army, the KGB, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. →

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Mr. Frum should check his facts. Arab missiles are not aimed at our homes and families. Soviet missiles, which grow more numerous with each passing day, are still targeted on us. Like Irving Kristol, Mr. Frum denigrates the worthiness of the Baltic peoples' aspirations for liberation. Perhaps the "unfortunate" people of Lithuania don't fit his standards of "couthness."

But Mr. Frum will not leave it there. After criticizing Mr. Buchanan for his opposition to a Martin Luther King holiday (an opposition shared by conservatives who have opposed making a hero of a man whose personal life might, by comparison, permit Ted Kennedy to become a candidate for sainthood, and whose public support was for the agenda of the hard left, ranging from abortion to support for the Vietcong), he asserts that Buchanan's "real message is inseparable from his sly Jew-baiting and his not-so-sly queer-bashing."

First of all, as Mr. Frum should know, Mr. Buchanan has much more nearly been the "bashee" rather than the "basher" on issues which members of the neocon community have chosen to characterize as anti-Semitic. On the question of "queer-bashing," Mr. Buchanan (like other Bible readers) knows that homosexual behavior is a vice to be denounced rather than conduct to be celebrated, or even tolerated. . . .

It's really a shame that *The American Spectator* has found it profitable to print David Frum's unworthy little stinkbomb.

—Howard Phillips, Chairman
The Conservative Caucus
Washington, D.C.

I read with some interest and a great deal of disapproval the article trashing Pat Buchanan by a David Frum. When he referred to "Holocaust-denial nut," he got my full attention. I'm a little weary of the charge of "denying the Holocaust" being applied to people who, like myself, don't believe "gas chambers" ever were used or that 6 million Jews were killed. I have not yet made up my mind what was meant by "the final solution."

—C. C. Wooding
Carson City, Nevada

The American Spectator is renowned for its irreverent commentaries, so I wonder if its Buchanan-bashing means it has kowtowed to conservatism's sacred cows. Why is it "sly Jew-baiting" to denounce the extraordinary influence the U.S. pro-Israel lobby has, and the kid-glove treatment of Israel itself? Shouldn't our self-interest be part of our policy toward Israel even as with all other nations? Are conservative commentators excluded from forthright talk on gay "rights"? And if an "America First" policy in WWII granted Nazism from Madrid to Moscow, would that have been worse than the actual result, Communism from East Germany to the Pacific? (Nazism likely would have died out sooner, to boot.)

David Frum asserts charges of kookiness without argument, using snippets of Buchanan's views as *prima facie* evidence. This tack is just plain lousy writing. Is the influx of from one to three million illegal immigrants a year, most of whom have no intention of assimilating or being assimilated by U.S. culture, really a matter of no concern or even exultation on conservatives' parts? Is Buchanan wrong to worry about jobs for the unskilled crossing into Mexico and, if so, why? And if drug use in the U.S. is a menace (whether it is is a separate issue from the one at hand) why is it inconsistent for a conservative to advocate the necessary government intervention? Frum makes a good argument that Buchanan is inconsistent in his stance on military intervention, but this inconsistency (if such it is) runs no deeper than William F. Buckley's pro-national service view. Yet Buckley isn't called a kook or otherwise trashed in the *Spectator*. . . .

—Ross Nelson
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

About the one thing no one else but David Frum would ever think to call Pat Buchanan—"uncandid"!—would serve well to describe Frum's own recent article; even better would be "dishonest."

Instances abound, so let's just pluck one from Frum's opening paragraph, where he accuses Buchanan of "defending a Nazi war criminal" (read: anti-Semitism). Of course, what Buchanan really did was to question—as did "60 Minutes"—whether John Demjanjuk really *was* a Nazi war criminal, i.e., the death-camp sadist remembered as "Ivan the Terrible." No doubt Demjanjuk's actual guilt or innocence matters as little to Frum as does Buchanan's true attitude toward Jews, many of whom admire Pat.

As for Buchanan's playing the "barroom bully" to "poor old Norman Podhoretz," that "little guy in glasses" —isn't this the same "poor old Norman" who commissioned the hit on Pat in *Commentary* a few months back, a smear job so sloppy and mean-spirited that dissenting letters in the next issue were voluminous even by the standards of that redoubtable journal? And for Frum to suggest that Podhoretz is anything but one of the most influential and powerful (neo)conservatives is disingenuous to say the least. . . .

—Jeffrey Rubin
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Pat is the Mickey Mantle of political commentary. Yes, he strikes out a lot, but he also hits some prodigious home runs.

The essence of Frum's article is summed up in his comments on the heroic dissenter M. E. Bradford, the man who did not become chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Professor Bradford's heresy, in Frum's view, is that he regards Abraham Lincoln with insufficient adoration.

Mel Bradford's point about Lincoln is that The Great Emancipator framed the Civil War in apocalyptic, religious imagery (as in the Gettysburg Address) that transformed the conflict into an exercise in hysterical propaganda and mass murder. But how else can we characterize Sherman's march to the sea, with its bombardment of women and children, its destruction of life and livelihood, and its culmination in a cruel and authoritarian Reconstruction? . . .

—Stephen R. Maloney
North Springfield, Vermont

[Pat Buchanan] is not a lapdog for that loony bin on the eastern end of the Mediterranean. He evidently doubts that we can transform a waterbuffalo into an American and he has serious doubts about the guilt of the poor Ukrainian who has been lynched by the "Chosen." Anyone who does not believe the Holohoax swindle has to be a pretty good boy in my book. Too bad he does not occupy the number one seat in the Blue and White House.

—Harvey A. Taylor
East Nicolaus, California

The vicious attack to which Buchanan is now being subjected by publications like yours is for one and only one reason, because Abe Rosenthal (the Al Sharpton of the American Jewish community) has decided that Mr. Buchanan is an anti-Semite.

—Tom Blair
San Pedro, California

It's not too difficult to figure the source of the mounting campaigns against Joe Sobran, Buchanan, and lately Sununu.

—Walter Eich
Palo Alto, California

David Frum replies:
It's a curious thing. Criticize Patrick Buchanan on any point—his protectionism, his support for a national sales tax, his preference for Nixon over Reagan in 1968, his calling other conservatives "fleas who conclude they are steering the dog"—and what comes flooding into your mailbox? Scrawled, misspelled letters that joke about the "Holohoax." Not a nice fan club.

Yes, Mr. Nelson, America's involvement in World War II really was worthwhile. Sorry, Mr. Eich, it wasn't the Elders of Zion who commissioned my article. Mr. Trees, one really can impute greatness to Martin Luther King. And yes, Mr. Wooding, the charge of "denying the Holocaust" does indeed apply to someone who refuses to believe that Germans killed Jews in gas chambers.

It's getting futile by now, but I do want to repeat that the focus of my article was not Buchanan's attitudes towards Jews and Israel. Other publications have discussed them exhaustively. Here's what I argued: The quarrels that Patrick Buchanan *says* he's got with "neoconservatives" are indeed legitimate matters of dispute. A split between Big Government and Small Government conservatives *is* emerging; the weakening of the Soviet Union *does* raise the issue of how involved America must continue to be in the problems of other countries; how much ethnocultural diversity is compatible with traditional American institutions *is* a valid question.

But Buchanan's positions on Big Government and non-interventionism are inconsistent. He's against taxes, but for tariffs. He opposes the Gulf War but wants a superpower confrontation over the Baltics. Buchanan's attack on "neoconservatism" is not inspired by substantial political differences, but by something else. What? I don't know, exactly. But I do know that, whatever's pushing him, he's heading in a dangerous direction. And, as one of the nation's most prominent conservatives, he's tainting all the rest of us with his reckless actions and accusations.

The founders of the conservative movement, especially William F. Buckley, Jr., understood that just as the left has a sad history of cozying up to America's foreign enemies, the right has in the past pandered to America's darkest prejudices. And so, just as any left that wants to go anywhere in American politics is now obliged to prove its patriotism, the right needs to prove that it's not composed of haters.

Nobody's suggesting that conservatives must approve of reverse discrimination, aid to Israel's socialist economy, women in the military, or the gay-rights political agenda. But it's both prudent and decent for conservatives to make clear that it is in fact conviction, and not hate, that motivates them. Unfortunately, as this correspondence shows, Patrick Buchanan has been finding a constituency among the movement's haters.

I thank William Hawkins and Chuck Fowler for their thoughtful replies. I don't quite know how to reply to Prof. Gottfried's exceedingly strange letter, but I can set his mind at ease on at least two points: I never attended the University of Toronto and Thomas Pangle has never in any sense been a mentor to me. □

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BEN STEIN'S DIARY

FINGERED

by Benjamin J. Stein

Thursday

Up at 5:00 a.m. to be in Culver City for a commercial by 7:00 a.m. This meant quite a lot to me because, you see, the director is a truly huge name in commercials. He had employed me about twenty-five times in the past four years, and then dropped me like a rock. Or a hot potato, or something. That was almost nine months ago, and so you can imagine how happy I was when I was called suddenly and asked to do the part.

It was a deep, dark mystery just exactly what I was going to do on the set. All I knew was that it had something to do with plastic trash bags, and if it all worked out right, I would be really happy.

I got there and ate my catered breakfast. It's not as much fun now that I do not eat meat, but it was still nice. Being at breakfast with people and getting paid is a change from having breakfast with Trixie while standing in the kitchen.

After a few minutes, the director came in. He gave me a pep talk about a wonderful motivational psychologist he had recently been seeing. As the director told it, the psychologist insisted that his patients be completely honest. "Most of us in this business are addicted to lying," he said. "If we can get over the addiction, we can change our lives."

I nodded agreeably while the director went on about how important it is to respect people and be honest with them. That's how it is on the set. You don't argue with the director, no matter what he's saying. Besides, he was right. It's not good to lie. "Honesty may not be the best policy," as my old boss, a famous ex-President, used to say, "but it's worth trying some of the time."

The letdown came when we got to the set. My "part," so to speak, was to play a finger. That's right. A finger. The commercial is just an in-house sales job for the rival maker of plastic bags that's up against Ziploc. I play a finger, like the one in the Ziploc bags, that gets yelled at by the star of a whole campaign for the rival bags, which as I recall are made by Glad.

So all you see is my finger, painted to have a little face on it. I say one very brief sentence and then get sneered at by the star.

It's never even going to be on TV. I was out of there by 9:00 a.m., telling myself over and over again something I recently heard: that even humiliation is good for you because it teaches you humility.

Maybe it's not even humiliation. Maybe it's being a team player. I have always had a hard time distinguishing the two.

Back at my little condo, I opened my pitiful mail. The big prize was a letter from a woman I have known for about ten years here in Los Angeles. She's an actress/model/paid trainer to the rich. Right now, she's an entrant in the Miss Middle-Aged California pageant, which she seems also to be sponsoring and to have created. I had donated either thirty or fifty dollars to the pageant and to her entry, even though I have not seen her for a good five years. In return, I got the following, excerpted so as to avoid shocking the conscience of America:

> I recently worked on a commercial with Robin Leach, and have doubled for Peggy Lipton, Suzanne Somers, and stood in for Priscilla Presley on the set of *Naked Gun 2½*. My hand was used in *The Marrying Man* and my legs on a couple of episodes of "Quantum Leap." I had several walk-ons as a waitress in the last season of "Dallas" and you might recall seeing me beside William Atherton on the plane in *Die Hard 2*. Currently you might or might not recognize me as a lesbian dancer in *Switch*, so you can see I've been busy working!

Yes, I thought, but have you been a finger in a sales video? Have you lived? The letter continued:

> Last week a Swiss producer/Polish "count" opened up a joint bank account for me and said he would transfer $400,000 to $1.4 million into it in the next few days. I said "okay" as long as I can get the interest transferred automatically into my checking account at the end of each month in exchange for holding it for him. He said fine, and then took off for Vienna, Munich, and now the Cayman Islands. He says he'll be back towards the end of next week. I'm also competing with Catherine Oxenberg for a part in Prince Stash's film.
>
> Would you ever consider being the ghost writer of my autobiography one day?

The letter also transmitted a very thin square of latex and a neatly written note from the sender that this was a prototype of a condom for women which she hoped to market. By now, playing a finger was looking pretty good.

Into Beverly Hills to get my hair cut and to pick up a gift for my researcher. It would be hard to tell you how desolate Beverly Hills is these days. The natives, by and large hordes of unbelievably tough-looking middle-aged women, are still around, but everyone else is gone. Oh, there are a few tourists, who are obvious because they carry cameras and don't look incredibly tough. But the rich, from wherever they once came, seem to have vanished. On Beverly Drive, store after store is shuttered. On Rodeo, there are no shuttered stores, but the stores are empty. The fraudulent "art" dealers, the endless used jewelry stores, the clothing shops for wealthy drug addicts—all empty. A few stores that cater to the middle class, especially Polo and Carroll, are still doing business, but the rest of the town looks as if a Depression had struck.

Somehow, whatever spirit of display and getting and spending pumped the place up has moved on, or is sleeping, or maybe it's playing a finger on a set in Culver City.

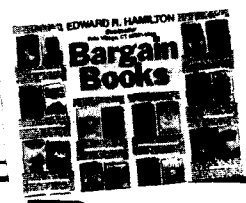
I strolled into Monte Factor, a barber shop above a bizarre clothing store that seems to cater mostly to women buying birthday presents for sons away in college. The place was empty except for me and my barber, a great craftsman named Eli. He told me that he thought business was down because of the real-estate depression. A lot of people just gave up and moved to Palm Springs, he said. "They just didn't see when it would ever end."

That's one of the great things about not ever having been rich. You don't miss it that much.

I walked farther down Beverly Drive and continued my examination of the women of Beverly Hills. I believe that, if I am not murdered, my greatest reputation will someday come as a result of my research into dress, hair, and jewelry. I have been mentally cataloguing all of this for many years now, and I have established a few Iron Laws.

One is the Iron Law of Inverse Girlishness. This law holds that the more childish, innocent, and carefree a woman's dress, the tougher, meaner, stupider, and more vicious she is. For example, if you show me a woman wearing a little frilly bow in her hair and little frilly skirts and a childish pullover T-shirt, I will show you a woman who is so tough she would make John Sununu fly Super

Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, lawyer, economist, and actor living in Malibu, California.



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Saver. Show me a woman wearing little-girl tights and tennis shoes, and I will show you a woman who would just as soon slit your throat as tell you the time of day. On the other hand, show me a woman wearing a neatly tailored business suit and high heels and stockings, and I will show you a well-adjusted woman without pathological hostility.

Then there is the Iron Law of Noble Metals and Aggression. This law, which I believe might revolutionize psychology, holds that women wearing silver jewelry are much angrier and more politically aggressive than women wearing gold jewelry.

I offer, for example, the women of the "Peace" Movement and the Pro-Murder Movement. Their faces are masks of rage and blighted homicidal mania. They literally foam with anger and the need to control everyone around them. And they all wear silver jewelry.

On the other hand, I offer my erstwhile wife and her friend, the celebrity sex crimes prosecutor Linda Alice Fairstein. They never seem particularly angry, and almost never try to control anyone. And they would not be caught dead wearing silver jewelry.

Then there are the laws for men, for instance the Iron Law of Hair Morality, which holds that the amount of time a grown man spends on making his hair look modish is a precise correlative of how likely he is to be involved in white-collar crime. Or the Iron Law of Lapels Fraud, which demonstrates that any man wearing a double-breasted suit bought after 1939 is currently involved in something punishable under the federal securities laws.

I went into the California Pizza Kitchen, which offers delicious pizza dirt cheep (sic). As I stood at the counter ordering my plain tomato-and-cheese, I saw two Sikhs eating across the room. They wore collar-to-floor cotton robes, turbans, and medallions, and had flowing beards. I paid no mind to them until one of them began to shout to me. "Ben," he said. "Ben Stein."

I looked over and saw one of them walking towards me. "It's me, Melvin," he said. "Melvin Bleckman, from Paramount."

Sure enough, it was Melvin Bleckman, who once worked in the story department at Paramount (and who, incredibly, had changed his name from Melvin Pinsky to Melvin Bleckman). He took my hand and told me how happy he was to see me. He had become a Sikh about five years ago, he said, because his life was just not working out. He had had too much freedom in his old life, he said. He had decided to follow the Sikh way, which had to do with the Buddha and a lot of other things like love and peace. He had married a fellow Sikh on the orders of the head Sikh, and was now doing (I'm not kidding) real-estate syndications.

"That business is in the toilet, though," he said. "I'm looking to go back to a studio. If you know of anything, let me know."

By the time I said goodbye to Mel Bleckman, I was mentally on my knees praying to get back to that set in Culver City and be a finger as soon as possible. Even a little pinkie-toe would be all right.

Friday

I have been feeling tired for a long time now. In fact, I have been feeling extremely tired since 1980 or 1981. But really tired, like my brains are being sucked out my toes by Marla Maples on a good day. I have been to many doctors, none of whom can find anything wrong with me. I haven't lost weight, so I guess I can figure it's not The Bad Thing. It does seem to respond extremely well to large fees for commercials, so maybe it's psychosomatic.

Anyway, it's bothering me. A few days ago, a woman whose son attends my devil boy son's preschool told me about a Healer just in from the Armenian SSR. The woman said that the Healer had miraculous powers and had cured maladies far worse than severe fatigue and despair.

Well, what the heck, it's just little things like Time and Money, so off I went to a small shopping center in the middle of Russian Jewish Emigré Hollywood. Every storefront in the place is in Cyrillic, and the women are all fat and the men look as if they would rather loaf around People's Tractor Factory No. 12 all day than work.

I passed by a Russian radiologist and a Russian plastic surgeon (there's one who will never be bored), and then found my man, the Healer, Manu, which is short for something too long to be pronounced. He was slight and short, with long, dirty hair, a decidedly hungry look, and the cheapest suit I have ever seen in America. He motioned me into a spare "examining room" and asked a few questions, such as how long I had been tired, what my age was, and what my occupation was. There was only one chair in the room, where I sat. He stood and stared at me. Then he said he would examine me. "Is there another examining room?" I asked.

"No," he said. "Stand up."

I stood up. He stood about three feet from me and passed his right hand up and down my body from a foot away, as if it were a metal detector. "Hmmm," he said. "You eat too much salt."

He had me there. He examined me some more and said my problem had to do with the pain I had no doubt been feeling in my left kidney. "I haven't had any pain in my kidney," I said.

Manu looked at me reproachfully and said, "Never mind, I fix anyway."

Manu passed his hands over me again, again from a distance, and then made a sweeping gesture towards my intestines, my heart, and my lungs. This, he told me, was to remove whatever impurities there were in my system. Then he told me to breathe in and out and imagine that poisons were being expelled and healthy things taken in as I breathed. Then he told me to breathe deeply and drink at least two quarts of water per day, and that next time he would work on my liver.

I passed more worried-looking new Americans on the way out. I went into the 7-Eleven in the shopping center and bought several bottles of Evian.

The amazing thing is that I felt better after I left Manu. The skeptic may chalk this up to autosuggestion. Me, I take it anyway I can get it.

Saturday

Dinner with a woman from my self-help group and her charming little daughter Geth. That's right. Not Beth. Geth. "It's short for Gethsemane," Mom said, "where something big happened in the Bible."

"What was that?" I asked.

"It was where our Lord told his followers to take up poisonous snakes and the snakes wouldn't hurt them or anything."

Another Iron Law. I call it the law of the Inverse Relationship Between the Complexity of Names and Success in Life. Show me a woman who named her child Bill or Jane or Nancy, and I will show you a kid who has a chance. Show me a woman who has named her child "Ly-Cee-Ah," and I will show you someone on welfare.

Anyway, Mom and Geth ate their Japanese food and Mom told me about her life. A husband in federal prison in New York *for life* for smuggling guns to Mexico and bringing back heroin and marijuana. Two years off and on in mental hospitals. A new husband recently in a drug detox center. Mom herself in Hazelden, no less.

"I think you and I are going to get along really well," Mom said. "My last boyfriend, the one who just kicked me out, worked for Drexel and I know you have something to do with Drexel."

"Not really," I said. "I just write about them."

"Anyway, you know all about the Bible, and that's really a great connection."

"Yes, yes, indeed," I agreed. "About taking up snakes and all that."

"I think you should know that I was horribly sexually exploited as a child," Mom added. "I usually don't tell people that."

"Of course."

"My parents threw me out, and I was held captive for several years by a couple who molested me and held a gun to my head to scare me."

"How old were you?"

"Sixteen and seventeen," she said as she slurped up some shrimp tempura.

"And you couldn't leave?"

"Well, they made me feel so much *shame*," she said, "and it was ten years ago, when there really weren't any laws protecting women." Another Iron Law, but then you knew that.

Monday

I think maybe I told you that I am writing about what would happen if Abraham Lincoln came back and saw America today. It's a script for a big, almost-defunct studio. The producer is obsessed with the idea that Lincoln used marijuana. He read about it in some drug comic book. Now he's sure it's true. I recently sent him the first fifty pages of my script, and he has just sent me back notes, from which I quote almost verbatim: "When Lincoln and Stanton are sitting around talking about how General Grant is doing, why not have Lincoln be really stoned, and have him start giggling like crazy about the idea of freeing the slaves, and how much it'll upset the Southerners?"

I can't really improve upon this, so I had better go to sleep. □

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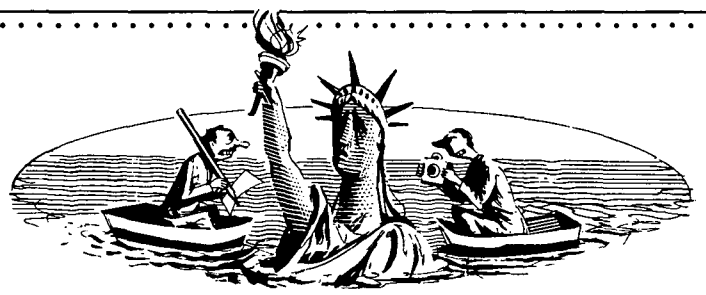

GAG RULERS

by Terry Eastland

What's wrong with the lead of Linda P. Campbell's story in the May 24 *Chicago Tribune*: "In a victory for abortion foes, the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld federal rules that prohibit government funded family-planning clinics from counseling women about ending their pregnancies or telling them where they can get an abortion." If you said the first six words of the sentence, you're right. What the Supreme Court held in *Rust* v. *Sullivan*, arguably the most controversial decision of the past term, was indeed a victory for abortion foes. But by reporting the decision in terms of the political winner, and in the lead no less, the *Tribune* distorted the essence of the story—the law handed down. Campbell is not the first journalist to focus on the political impact of a Court decision. It's done all the time, even by the *Washington Times*: while Dawn Ceol's lead was faithful to the nuances of the Court's ruling in *Rust*, the paper's editors distorted her front-page story with this headline: "Abortion clinics lose in funding case."

There is a compelling reason for the press to avoid politics and stick to the law in reporting on the Supreme Court (and other courts, for that matter). In their intellectual complexity, judicial decisions demand a reader's close attention. Introducing political implications, especially in lead paragraphs and headlines, is hardly the way to bring about a well-informed citizenry.

I'm not saying the press should ignore the political impact of a decision—there is room in the body of a story for that. A better course—assuming an adequate supply of column inches (or air time) —is to run two stories: one on the law in a case, the other on the decision's political impact. That's what the *Wall Street Journal* did in covering *Rust*. Stephen Wermiel covered the law, David Shribman the politics. The headline atop the law story—"High Court Upholds Abortion Regulations"—was dull but accurate. Just the way it should have been.

Sticking to the law in reporting Supreme Court decisions requires critical detail. The *Washington Post*'s lead on *Rust*—"The Supreme Court ruled yesterday that federally funded family planning clinics may be prohibited from giving any information about abortion" —omitted an important detail: the federal regulations that do the prohibiting.

At least the *Post* did not succumb to the shorthand of one network television correspondent, who said that now that the Supreme Court had spoken, it was "the law of the land" that family planning clinics receiving federal funds could not counsel women about abortion. Put in those terms, *Rust* sounded like a constitutional command from the Court. But all *Rust* did was end the challenge to the regulations—these are your "law of the land."

USA Today contributed to this misunderstanding in a May 28 story reporting Planned Parenthood's legislative efforts. "Top Priority: Erase Latest Court Ruling," went the headline. But it is not the ruling as such that Planned Parenthood wants to erase, but the regulations. Again, the Court did not write, much less require, the regulations. It merely upheld them. If Planned Parenthood is successful in persuading Congress to write its kind of statute in this area, the law of *Rust* v. *Sullivan* will still be, as the lawyers say, good law.

With few exceptions, the stories on *Rust* reported less on the first half of the opinion, which focused on administrative law, than on the second, which focused on constitutional issues, especially the plaintiffs' free-speech claim. This meant that a key aspect of the ruling was underplayed: namely, that it is not the business of the judiciary to do the policy-making work of the elective branches. This journalistic failure was compounded by an unfair treatment of the constitutional issues, which the press reported in terms wholly favorable to the pro-abortion lobby. It did so when *Rust* came down, and continues to do so as I write (in mid-July), with Congress considering legislation in this area. The press, of course, has long been biased in favor of abortion rights and a sucker for anyone claiming a violation of free-speech rights. The decision in *Rust* thus was bound to test the fairness of journalists. Not too many passed.

Typical was the performance of the *Chicago Tribune*'s Campbell, who wrote that the anti-abortion counseling regulations are "known collectively as 'the gag rule.'" What she failed to say is who calls them that: Planned Parenthood, the ACLU, and other opponents of the rules (which, incidentally, do not prohibit the use of the term "abortion" —a point Campbell does not mention). And in her second reference to "the gag rule," Campbell and her editors in effect endorsed the Planned Parenthood lobby by dropping the quotation marks: "The controversy over the gag rule revolves around . . ."

It bears noting that the regulations constitute not a "gagging" but a recognition that if the government pays for a program, it can shape it. The regulations have no bearing on what doctors do outside the federally funded program; there they remain completely free to counsel for (or against) abortion. These elements were missing from Campbell's story, and others.

No news organization proved more biased than *Time*. "Gagging the Clinics" was the headline for its story on *Rust*, followed by this alarmist subhead: "The Justices did not disturb the constitutional right to an abortion but made it illegal to discuss the procedure in federally funded centers." Correspondent Jill Smolowe did not hide her opinions: "The court's ruling in *Rust* v. *Sullivan* made little medical or intellectual or moral sense."

Smolowe was not the only journalist to flaunt her opinions, especially when attention in the wake of *Rust* focused on congressional efforts to write new, i.e., Planned Parenthood, law. On NBC's

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Terry Eastland is resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. His book on the Reagan and Bush presidencies will be published in early 1992 by the Free Press.

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"Today Show," Katie Couric, for example, conducted a lengthy *tête-à-tête* with Barbara Radford of the National Abortion Federation. The two discussed how horrible the *Rust* ruling is and what a devastating impact it will have on women, doctors, and the First Amendment. I'm not aware of a single occasion on which a morning network news program, or any other television talk show, featured a lengthy interview, much less a sympathetic one, with an advocate of the regulations. Nor, in general, did the media report in any depth on the views of those who'd wanted the regulations in the first place and oppose changing them in the wake of *Rust*. The press—in its greatest sin of omission—has also failed to report that legislation proposed in response to *Rust* would not simply allow but *require* clinics receiving federal funds to counsel on abortion. Where are the great press defenders of freedom of speech and conscience?

The simple-minded character of most press commentary on *Rust* is particularly irksome. "What was astonishing," intoned ABC's David Brinkley, "was [the Court's] absurd view that medical personnel paid with government money lose their right to free speech. The Constitution says no law shall abridge freedom of speech, no law. Could it be that the Court hasn't read that part?" Brinkley usually does better than this. The issue in *Rust* is not as simple as he thinks.

When the Supreme Court, in 1989 and 1990, struck down state and federal flag-burning statutes on First Amendment grounds, the press was laudatory. It has not occurred to Brinkley et al. that, in the present Court's view, there is a distinction between those cases and *Rust*. This Court reads the First Amendment as prohibiting laws that flatly state: you cannot say *x*. It does not read the First Amendment as prohibiting the government from designing a federally funded program that limits what can be done and said. Had the Court been faced in *Rust* with a law saying no doctor can counsel on abortion, it would have struck it down. Quoting the First Amendment as though it ends debate will not do.

The press's carping coverage of *Rust* set the tone for its analyses of the rest of the Supreme Court's 1990 term. On the Sunday after the decision was rendered, the *New York Times*'s Linda Greenhouse, whose participation in an abortion-rights march two years ago drew deserved criticism, wrote that *Rust* "brought the Court itself into sharp focus. . . . This is a Court with an activist's appetite and reach." Despite the presence of jurists known as judicial conservatives, said Greenhouse, this Court does not play "the passive role identified with the label of 'judicial restraint.'"

To make this point in regard to *Rust* (Greenhouse also discussed two decisions handed down earlier in the term), she invoked Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's dissenting opinion. O'Connor wrote that the Court should not have addressed the constitutional questions in the case: "It is a fundamental rule of judicial restraint that this Court will not reach constitutional questions in advance of the necessity of deciding them." O'Connor argued that, should any interpretation of a statute raise serious constitutional problems, the Court can avoid difficulties by using a different interpretation—in the case of *Rust*, by holding that Congress could not have intended to authorize constitutionally problematic regulations.

The press delights in hoisting people on their own petards—in this case advocates of judicial restraint on their philosophy. But Greenhouse simply took O'Connor's remarks at face value. The majority in *Rust* did not find "serious" constitutional problems with the regulations; so on O'Connor's argument it was not obliged to do what she herself said it should have done. Also, Greenhouse (like O'Connor) failed to consider whether a decision against the regulations would itself not have been activist. After all, such a ruling would have voided an executive-branch effort to faithfully execute a law of Congress—a well-considered and properly conducted effort based on findings of the General Accounting Office and the Department of Health and Human Services that the intent of the enacting Congress had not been enforced.

This term the Court wound up overruling five previous Supreme Court decisions. This number led many in the press again to accuse the Court of "judicial activism," this time on the theory that judicial restraint means strict adherence to the doctrine of *stare decisis* (Latin, for standing by that which has been decided). Such a definition of judicial restraint is not one held by any of its apostles currently on the Court, and if any justices in ages past held this view, they were very few in number.

Be that as it may, accusing the Court of violating judicial restraint is easy, as Greenhouse showed: you just go to the dissenting opinions and, regardless of their merits, let them be your guide. Thus, the press took its cue in calling the Court activist from the dissent in *Payne* v. *Tennessee*, which overruled 1987 and 1989 decisions regarding the admissibility of "victim impact" statements in murder cases. The author of this dissent? Justice Thurgood Marshall, that lifelong exponent of judicial restraint. □

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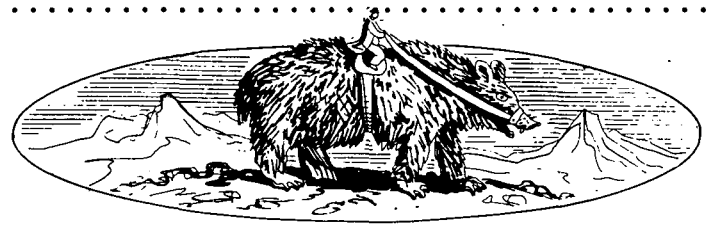


GROWING PAINS

by Cathy Young

Less than a year after the Soviet Union received its own (far more verbose and far less clear-cut) version of the First Amendment, the Law on the Press, independent newspapers have become a visible and unruly presence on the scene. They range from the dignified publications of newborn parties, such as the Russian Republican party's *Gospodin Narod* ("The Sovereign People"), to the frankly sensationalist and avidly read tabloid *Sovershenno Sekretno* ("Top Secret"), whose publisher, Soviet mystery writer Yulian Semyonov, has long been rumored to have KGB connections. Somewhere in between is the irreverent *Kommersant*, which offers weekly updates on Western business executives' visits to the USSR, politically astute commentary, and zingy headlines, such as this one on a story about compensation to offset the effect of recent Soviet price increases: "We Won't Have Any More Poverty. Or Any Less." It also features witty video tips, mostly for pirated versions of brand-new Western films such as *The Silence of the Lambs* ("A deranged tailor requires women with soft skin for his technical needs, and finds out that a U.S. Senator's daughter would make very good material. . . .")—with the unintentionally comical translation *The Silence of the Sheep*, but even *Kommersant* isn't perfect.

Nationalist groups of the Pamyat type have their newspapers, with a knack for raising cutting questions with not-so-subtle irony: Is the underrepresentation of Jews in unskilled factory jobs a result of anti-Semitic discrimination? Meanwhile, Russia's first gay and lesbian magazine, *Tema* ("Theme"), has won a libel suit against the neighborhood paper *Karetny Ryad*, which had alleged that *Tema*'s editor-in-chief Roman Kalinin (see *TAS*, December 1990) had spoken in lyrical terms of the joys of pedophilia. (*Pravda* and TASS used the story as an occasion to take a shot at the radical Moscow City Council, which had allowed *Tema* to register legally.)

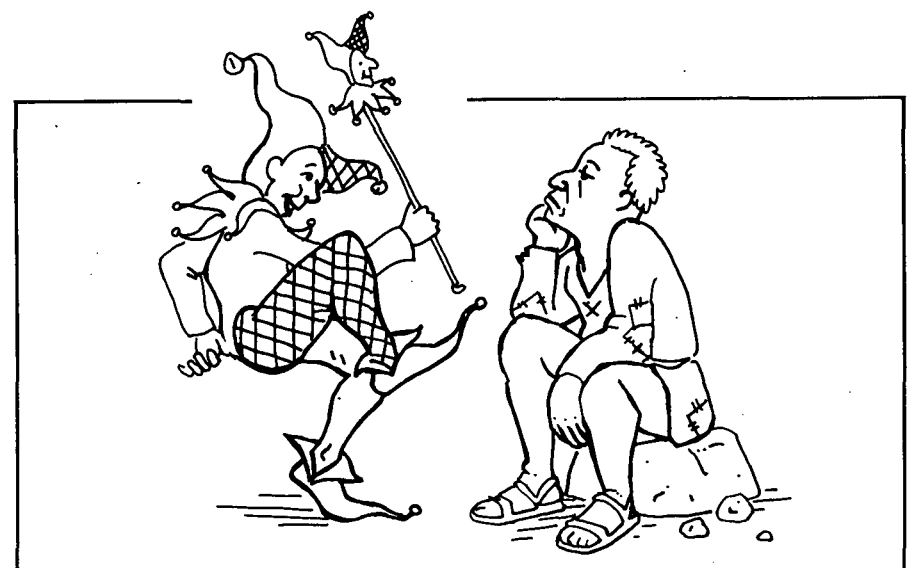
Cathy Young is the author of Growing Up in Moscow *(Ticknor & Fields).*

Tema's victory in court must be something of a legal milestone for the straitlaced Soviets. However, a trustworthy Moscow source assures me that Kalinin privately admitted he had not been misquoted—but went ahead with the lawsuit anyway, since he knew that his comments had not been tape-recorded.

The circulation of independent newspapers has yet to match that of official ones, which is often in the millions. And there is still no independent daily, though the popular *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* ("The Independent Gazette") comes out three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The free Russian press is clearly gaining ground. What is it like to work for it? For an inside view, I spoke to Arkady Dubnov, managing editor of the weekly *Demokraticheskaya Rossiya* ("Democratic Russia"), in the United States for a brief visit in July. *DR*, which made its first appearance as a monthly in June 1990, then faltered and was reborn as a weekly in March, is published by a holding company of the same name, with world chess champion and *Wall Street Journal* contributing editor Gary Kasparov as president; its advisory board includes Vladimir Bukovsky, Elena Bonner, and the radical parliamentarian Yuri Afanasyev.

What's it like? The key word is uncertainty, a state by no means unique to free newspapers in today's Soviet Union. Anyone who opens a private business, Dubnov reminded me, has to worry about the prospect that such activities may be outlawed as contrary to the socialist spirit. But a radical newspaper has special concerns: Dubnov recalled the first gathering of the paper's editorial staff in February. "The first thing we discussed—and it was natural, in the wake of January's events in the Baltics—was that if we started making the kind of newspaper we were talking about, we would be the first candidates for a visit from the Black Berets. This thought, perhaps, excited or stimulated us to a certain degree." Because *Demokraticheskaya Rossiya* stays scrupulously within the bounds of the Law on the Press (which forbids only the disclosure of "military secrets"), Dubnov does not think the paper could be shut down legally, but the same effect could be achieved by extra-legal means, by cutting off access to paper or printing facilities.

With a circulation of about 170,000, *Demokraticheskaya Rossiya* remains, after more than a dozen issues, a losing enterprise. Dubnov is convinced that the circulation could rise to more than 700,000. But on top of the paper and newsprint problems, distribution, too, remains in the hands of the state—the Soviet Ministry of Communications. For now, both *Demokraticheskaya Ros-*



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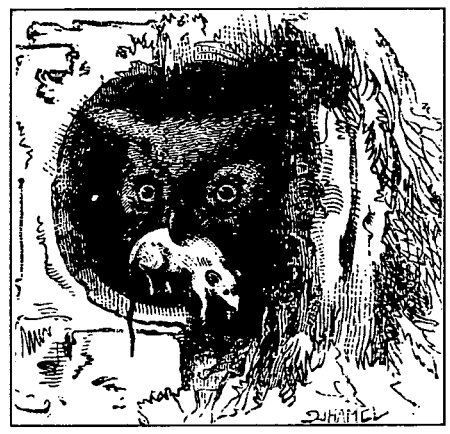
siya and *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (which has a similar circulation but, according to Dubnov, reaches fewer readers outside Moscow) are available on newsstands only; subscriptions are out of the question for now, since the Ministry of Communications' terms are prohibitive. The Russian Republic has its own ministry of communications, which has plans to organize its own subscription service—sometime in the future. At present, *Kommersant*, which has been around since January 1990 and is backed by the wealthy Association of United Cooperatives, is the only independent newspaper with its own subscribers. Meanwhile, Dubnov said that they were getting "a tremendous number of calls and letters" from people complaining they couldn't find the paper. In the first weeks of publication, a caller from Pyatigorsk griped that it was being sold in that town at 15 rubles a copy (quite a profit margin on the 50-kopeck cover price), and added that he would gladly pay 20 rubles if he could only have a copy all to himself. Such zeal may seem a bit excessive, but Dubnov pointed out that provincials are starved for alternative coverage and points of view: the usual fare on newsstands in their towns runs to *Pravda* and the even more orthodox *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, occasionally spiced up by the cautiously liberal *Izvestia*. Currently, *Demokraticheskaya Rossiya* is working toward an agreement with several other major independent newspapers to pool their financial and other resources and organize their own independent network of distribution to newsstands across the Russian Republic.

Production is a problem as well. While *DR* is about to acquire its own typesetting equipment and to start doing the typesetting and layout on the premises rather than having it done by a small company for a sizable fee, it still has to resort to the services of a government-owned printshop—that of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. (Similarly, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* is printed at the *Izvestia* printshop.) While government-owned, it is also quite capitalist-minded, giving preference—such as better quality offset printing—to customers who can afford to pay in hard currency. (Dubnov assured me that, curiously, publications of a Slavophile and even anti-Semitic bent seem to get more favorable treatment as well.)

Under such pressures, safeguarding one's independence is a constant challenge. About six weeks after the newspaper's March debut, the Russian Republic's minister of media and communications, Mikhail Poltoranin—who was a respected journalist before he went into politics full-time—invited some of the editors for a chat, complimented them, and announced that the ministry would like to co-sponsor *DR*. The prospect was a tempting one: at the time, the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* printshop was threatening to stop printing the paper, and the ministry was offering help with money and printing facilities, promising, at the same time, to refrain from any interference with editorial decisions. The offer was to be discussed at a board meeting of the parent company but ran into staunch opposition from Gary Kasparov. The editors eventually realized that Kasparov was probably right when, having criticized some of Yeltsin's tactics and statements shortly before the election, they got a message from the Russian parliament conveying a certain displeasure. Dubnov said that while he naturally hoped for the strengthening of the republican government (at the expense of the central government's powers), he had "no illusions about counting on help from the Russian government any time soon. If it leaves us alone, that's good enough."

Is the newspaper completely uncensored? Apparently so, always with the exception of "state secrets" (which apparently no longer include, as in the past, the inner sancta of Soviet sausage factories). A recent issue's humor page offered acid, hilariously absurdist "Gorbachev anecdotes." Sample: "Gorbachev left home for work one day and slipped and fell on the ice. Pugo and Popov rushed to help him up." Pugo, the hardline minister of internal affairs, blames the icy pavement on the "democrats"; Popov, the radical mayor of Moscow (whose often conciliatory attitude



toward Gorbachev is surely one of the targets of this satire), on lack of funds. Gorby decides to solve the problem by ordering armored personnel vehicles to cruise the streets of the city—with the sole purpose of breaking up the ice, of course. *Demokraticheskaya Rossiya* has not been prosecuted for offending the honor and dignity of the president, so perhaps he's decided to lighten up.

Asked what could appear in *Demokraticheskaya Rossiya* that could not appear, say, in the semi-official *Literaturnaya Gazeta*—from which most of *DR*'s current staff had defected—Dubnov begged to rephrase the question. He cited an obsequious article on Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov which had appeared in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* right after the infamous monetary reform as the sort of article that could never run in *DR*.

All the professional journalists who had come to work for the paper, Dubnov said, did so at some cost—sacrificing not just higher incomes but all-important fringe benefits, such as the free use of cars and summer homes, trips abroad, and so forth. The rewards include letters from all over Russia—some grateful, others hardly so. "I get notes that brand us Zionists, Jews, kikes, whores, and various unprintable things," said Dubnov, who is Jewish. "Such letters are few but they are a source of ineffable delight." But hate mail can be more coherent, and more frightening. One columnist, Ninel Loginova, received a "death sentence" written in quasi-official language.

A similar missive, sent to the editor-in-chief of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* Vitaly Tretyakov (with the envelope marked "Personal"), was published in that newspaper; it is a remarkable document. Signed by "The Coordinating Council of the People's Committee for the Salvation of Soviet Socialist Russia" and dated April 3, 1991, it reads:

> Because *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, and consequently its editor-in-chief citizen TRETYAKOV V., is inciting anti-Soviet, anti-socialist, anti-Communist psychosis . . . doing the work of Western and American-Israeli intelligence, and preaching the restoration of capitalism and Russophobia, the CC PC SSSR, by a majority of votes, has RESOLVED:
> 1) to sentence citizen Tretyakov V. to DEATH;
> 2) to carry out the sentence PUBLICLY;
> 3) to DELAY the execution of the sentence until the full restoration of Soviet socialist power in Russia;
> 4) to inform citizen Tretyakov of the sentence.
> 5) This sentence is final and irreversible, with no right of appeal.

Maybe they're just kidding. But the document is marked "Case No. 0120."

Yeltsin's Creepy Veep

In comparing independent newspapers such as his to the dependent ones such as *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Dubnov said proudly that *DR* would never balk at antagonizing anyone in power or rising to power, and pointed out that despite their political sympathies, the editors felt it was not merely their right but their duty to criticize Yeltsin if he did something wrong: the pre-election issue (June 7) ran a front-page article by well-known political commentator Leonid Batkin, "For Yeltsin But With Eyes Wide Open." And yet, as far as I have been able to find out, most of the Russian free press gave Yeltsin pretty much of a free ride on one rather disturbing score. So did the U.S. media, which can always plead special ignorance.

The issue is Yeltsin's choice of a running mate, Alexander V. Rutskoi, who headed a "Communists for Democracy" faction (coming next: "Cannibals for Vegetarianism" and "Rapists for Women's Rights") during the split in the Commie bloc at the March Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation. Rutskoi, a 44-year-old colonel in the Soviet armed forces, flew 428 combat missions in Afghanistan, was shot down twice while bombing guerrilla bases (villages?), and spent some time as a POW; upon returning home, he was awarded a Hero of the Soviet Union medal. And that's only the beginning. In the spring of 1989, Rutskoi became one of the principal founders of Otechestvo (Fatherland), a major anti-Semitic group in Moscow. Around the same time, he ran for a seat in the USSR People's Congress. According to a May 19 dispatch of the News and Information Agency in Moscow, Rutskoi "enjoyed active support from Pamyat, Otechestvo, the district committee of the Communist party and the official circles of the (Russian Orthodox) Church." When his top campaign aide, Lt. Col. Burkov (an Otechestvo board member), was asked at a meeting with voters for his thoughts on Sakharov, Burkov said, "I'd like to see that Sakharov hang." Rutskoi later repudiated this comment "and said that he respected Sakharov 'as the scientist who created the atom bomb.'" He lost the race.

In the spring of 1990, he ran in a small-town district for a seat in the Russian parliament (with the support of the regional committee of the Communist party) and won. In the same year, he left his post as vice chairman of Otechestvo but did not resign membership in the group. At the first Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation, Rutskoi ran into a group of anti-Communist deputies in the lobby and remarked, "You'll come crawling to us yet, and bring the rope [to hang you with]." In January 1991, however, Rutskoi showed signs of going over to the other side, coming to the defense of Yeltsin against the infamous Col. Victor Alksnis.

I'm not saying it's time to give up on Yeltsin. But if the free press had done its job, Yeltsin would have dropped Rutskoi faster than you could say David Duke. And what *did* the free press do? The Batkin article chided Yeltsin for picking a Communist as his running mate but did not even mention the Otechestvo connection. At a May 21 press conference, Rutskoi asserted that he had joined Otechestvo assuming it was merely a group for the protection of Russian culture and disassociated himself from it as soon as he realized the organization was taking on anti-Semitic leanings. Yeah, and Duke thought the Ku Klux Klan was just a college fraternity with a funny name. □

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THE GREAT CAIRENE SALOON SERIES

DOG DAYS AT HAMED'S

by Terence P. Jeffrey

Thursday is Cairo's Friday, when the Marine barracks within the high-walled compound of the U.S. Embassy is transformed into an Animal House with M-16s. Year-abroad Harvardians and Berkeleyites, hemorrhaging hearts from the Catholic Relief Agency (most of whom, strangely, are Episcopalians), and the not-yet-married daughters of the Egyptian aristocracy mix amiably with beer-chugging, burger-flipping, zipper-headed, ZZ Top–blasting, 19-year-old American warriors. The other English-speaking embassies have their own intramural fun.

But by my second Thursday in town I was too good for all that. I had moved to Cairo in the fall of 1984 with a purpose—to imbibe only the purest nectar of Egyptian culture. I avoided the embassy parties and the American hotels and bars, until my romance with unadulterated Arabism was brought low, and very nearly extinguished, by a never-to-be-taxonomized gastrointestinal parasite.

That Thursday I coaxed a Canadian diplomat, a classmate from my Arabic language program at the American University, to join me at Hamed's. Hamed's stood on the Corniche, across the street from one of those never-to-be-completed highway projects found only in the Third World and certain parts of the northeastern United States. This one was a four-lane overpass that would connect Cairo with an island in the Nile called al-Gezira. In Arabic, *al-Gezira* means "the island." I lived on "the island" in an apartment building called "the apartments." My Canadian friend Andy lived on the other side of "the island" in a neighborhood called "the engineers."

Most of the road crew had come from Nubia (southernmost Egypt) for the job, and slept in lean-tos on the riverbank directly opposite Hamed's front door. They were divided into two theological camps: half spent the evenings prostrating themselves toward Mecca and polishing a gloss into their prayer beads; the others idled at Hamed's polishing off a few cold ones.

Hamed's—as we later came to call it, after the little boy who waited tables there—was an al fresco establishment. Its front wall was a Schweppes Orange Soda billboard, its side wall a crumbling twelfth-century mosque. The other two sides were formed by a mountain of every conceivable sort of junk, from Pharaonic rubble to Pirelli tires. But Hamed's principal architectural feature was a red-steel, top-loaded, vintage 1952 Coca-Cola cooler. Within it, beneath a brown burlap blanket, amidst whatever ice could be found, rested the establishment's inventory of Stella, Egypt's official beer.

As Andy and I arrived, the old man who ran the place was splashing down the dirt floor with a bucket of Nile water. This was a common housekeeping trick around Cairo—not only in places like Hamed's, which really had a dirt floor, but also in finer establishments, where the marble, alabaster, or hardwood had been overlaid with strata of windblown Sahara. Andy and I took a table behind the largest puddle.

"You ever been here before?" I asked Andy.

"Can't say I have."

"I've been walking by it all week," I said. "Couldn't resist coming here at least once for a beer."

A boy of no more than nine swung over to our table. He was crippled. His wrists were fitted with leather stirrups, which came over his knuckles to fit his fingertips like gloves. His body was bent somewhere below the waist, at which juncture he was supported by a leather sled suspended from his shoulders. He propelled himself by pivoting from one gloved fist to the other. His legs dragged behind him like an afterthought.

"Polio," Andy remarked under his breath.

The boy looked at us. "*Birra*?" he asked.

"Two," I said.

He swung back to the cooler. The old man fished for the Stellas. Stella is the nationalized brewery of Egypt, and the beer is served everywhere in dingy brown half-liter bottles. The boy slung two of them under his arm and swiveled back our way. He opened the beers in two quick flips and set them on the table.

Andy and I drank in silence as the sun slipped below the Schweppes sign and the workers began shuffling into the bar. Two tired and leathery men in dirty gelabiyyas took the table next to ours. The old man turned on a black-and-white TV that sat on a folding metal chair.

One of the men turned and spoke. "*Amreeki?*"

"I am. My friend's Canadian."

"Two Americans," the Egyptian said, dismissing us with a wave of his hand.

We finished our beers. Unbidden, the boy brought us two more.

A sad-eyed, tongue-dragging dog crept into the bar. His every step seemed pained, rheumatic. He made his way slowly to the puddle beside our ta-

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Terence P. Jeffrey is an editorial writer at the Washington Times.

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ble and plopped down into the mud.

"You know," said Andy, "eighty percent of the dogs in Cairo are rabid."

"That can't be true."

"That's what they told us at the embassy."

The dog began rubbing its posterior back and forth in the mud. Neither Hamed, the old man by the cooler, nor any of the construction workers paid him much attention.

"But I haven't seen any dogs foaming at the mouth or chasing people through the streets."

"You wouldn't be likely to," said Andy. "Rabies is apparently so endemic here that the dogs who get it have developed a relative immunity. They tend to get arthritic and slow and linger that way for a long time—until some other rabid dog does them in or they just waste away."

"Well, what about this guy here?" I said, gesturing to the dog, who was still rubbing his haunches in the mud.

"I don't think you would want to get bitten by him."

As if in response, the dog stood up and yawned. With only a twitch of warning, the creature began violently shaking his hind quarters. Mud and dog hair splattered everywhere, but especially in our faces. The dog yawned again and squatted back into the puddle. The men at the table next to ours nearly tumbled into the muck with him for joy.

"The dog is a patriot!" one of them said.

"This is Egypt," said the other. "America is for Americans, Egypt for Egyptians."

There was only a slight glimmer of sunset behind the Giza skyline as Andy and I left Hamed's. We crossed the Corniche to the old, cantilevered 26 July Bridge, which stood in the shadow of the concrete monstrosity the boys in Hamed's were building. I was heading home to "the apartments," Andy back to "the engineers."

We were both still wiping the dog's mud away when we reached the far end of the span and became aware of a malodorous mist descending from above. Thirty feet up, a two-foot-wide pipe was suspended from the girders, hissing out a jet of fluid.

"I hope that's not sewage."

"Not even in Cairo," I said, "would they build an elevated sewer line."

The next morning I awoke feeling as if a hummingbird were hovering in my stomach. Five days later, during a brief respite from the stomach-grinding and flash fevers, I staggered to the clinic at the American University. I caught the doctor in the middle of lunch. He cordially took a urine sample in a funnel-shaped quart beaker, which he swirled over his head as he chomped on a bean curd and pita sandwich.

"*Ya*, Hussein," he said to his male nurse. "You know how you can tell if it's hepatitis?"

"*La!*"

"It's hepatitis when it foams yellow," the doctor mumbled through his sandwich. He set down his beaker. "It's not hepatitis."

He and Hussein were stumped. They prescribed bottled water, canned food, and an airplane trip to the United States if I felt strong enough to make it to the airport. □

THE TALKIES

THE CHILD IS FATHER TO THE MAN

by James Bowman

Families and sentimentality go together like Corn Flakes and milk. One of the easiest tricks in the cinematic trade is to put children *in loco parentis* as a way of teaching Mom and Pop what the Really Important Things in life are. *Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead* follows on from *Home Alone* as a popular demonstration that parents are unnecessary, and John Hughes's latest, *Dutch*, is about a really horrible child who has to learn to be a kid again from "a great big demented child." But fully to recapture Rousseau's dream of the "naturalness" of childhood, you have to have little saints and sages, strong in innocence, actually changing places with their corrupt old parents.

Such a film is *Regarding Henry*, with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen as their cute kid. The premise here is that a shark of a lawyer can become a looney tuna, if you can contrive to blow away just exactly the right part of his brain. Shot in the head after dropping in on a convenience-store hold-up, Ford is restored with miraculous speed to everything but the memory and the morality of the man he was before. Not only does he stop defrauding poor and helpless people, he starts making amends to those he once defrauded when he finds out about his past life.

The kid gets some good moments, as when, for example, she tells the doorman of her apartment building that she and her mother are going "to get my dad; he doesn't remember me." As he hadn't remembered the doorman in a scene just before the shooting, it makes the two of them complicit in suffering from his earlier neglect. "Remembering" henceforth has a double meaning, and it is only by forgetting what he was that Dad is able to remember not only his daughter but other people who were not important enough to make an impression on him before. Thus, his first act on returning home from the hospital is to hug the doorman.

That embrace is typical of how the film overstates its points. Do doormen really want to be hugged? Do we have to have Ford frolicking with a puppy to show that he doesn't eat people anymore? It is a nice touch to have the little girl who was so frightened of him now playing the stern parent to her childlike father, teaching him to read again from the children's book *Are You My Mother?*—which is both funny, in the circumstances, and a serious question to such a lackadaisical parent. But when the girl rattles off what was once, apparently, the old, bad daddy's litany of chores by means of which his own father had taught him "to appreciate the work ethic," they both laugh at no longer knowing what that means. It only serves to remind us that this leisurely process of getting back in touch with the Really Important Things is being subsidized by the wicked law practice he is learning to hate.

Therein lies the real sentimentality of this film. The happy family shot at the end with the puppy dancing on its hind legs and everybody going off to spend

James Bowman, The American Spectator*'s movie critic, is the American editor of the* Times Literary Supplement.

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lots of quality time together we know to be a fake. In the real world, people can't just forget what the work ethic means. And this fakery brings home the fakery of the rest. Ford's transformation is too easy, as is the uplifting advice about finding out "who you are." Like so much of the film, this is just too pat. Before he is shot, he slicks his hair back and smokes cigarettes; it is to buy cigarettes that he goes into the convenience store in the first place. Afterwards he lets his hair flop and smokes no more. He even discovers that he doesn't like eggs or steak. Cholesterol, nicotine, and hair gel represent moral as well as physical unhealthiness.

Likewise, in *Dying Young*—which is so hokey that nobody actually has the gumption to die in it—the upper-class cancer patient, Campbell Scott, learns from the lovely but dimwitted Julia Roberts (not a child, it's true, but meant to be equally authentic) not only "how to live" but how not to smoke. This guy does need help. In the one sex scene he tries to pull her T-shirt off the wrong way (four years at Yale plus graduate school and he thinks you pull *down*?). But he might want to ask himself if this living business is really worth it with a girl who forces him to give up smoking and to eat health food, betrays him to his father, and wears peace movement earrings. The girls of his favorite artist, Gustav Klimt, are more interesting, and they don't care if you have the occasional Camel or your hair falls out from chemotherapy.

Giuseppe Tornatore's *Everybody's Fine* ranks a little below these two as a schmaltz-dipper. As the title suggests, it is about the lies that family life requires us to tell—since everybody, most emphatically, is not fine—and especially those that grown children tell their parents to prevent them from worrying or being disappointed. Again there is a role reversal here, since the parent (Marcello Mastroianni), is being protected by his children from the harshness of reality. The children are ashamed that their lives have not come up to their father's expectations, marred as they have been by divorce, illegitimacy, bad jobs, and career dead-ends. So they conspire to put on a charade to convince him that "Everybody's Fine."

He is not fooled for long. To show us how parents never stop worrying about their children, we see the father's recurrent fantasy of a black balloon trailing tentacles like a jellyfish which descends while they are at the beach. The children grab hold of the tentacles and the balloon reascends, taking them away with it. It is one of several arresting visual images in this film, but, by focusing so much on the still very watchable Mastroianni, it too degenerates into sentimentality. When the old man returns to Sicily and, addressing his wife's grave, lies to her in turn that "Everybody's Fine," we are left with the pleasant, happy images of the warm South while the realities of Rome, Florence, Milan, and Turin, where his unsuccessful children live, are as shadowy to us as they are to him. Ending on the lie may be good for relationships, but it is very bad for art.

Sentimentality is not exactly the problem with James Cameron's *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, but it is a not-unrelated difficulty. Again there is a cute kid: the boy, now ten years old, who we know is one day going to lead the human race in a war against the machines. The boy is actually a juvenile delinquent, but that's just because his foster parents are so awful and his mother is in the loony bin (oh, the injustice of it!) for trying to warn the world about a nuclear holocaust and a war with killer machines that she knows is coming. The boy instructs not his mother but Arnold Schwarzenegger, his own personal robot/bodyguard sent back from the future, how to say kiddie catch phrases like "No problemo" and "*Hasta la vista*, baby." Above all, he must teach this killing machine not to kill and so strike a blow for the good old human race, which otherwise comes out of this film pretty badly.

Cameron adds his $88 million worth to the tough-woman myth by making Linda Hamilton, a mere mother in the first *Terminator*, into a *macha* machine, a killerette who has nothing to learn even from Schwarzenegger, who really *is* supposed to be a machine, about blowing people away. The old iron-pumper, the self-created man, is clearly at his best in such a role. Robots probably do speak with Austrian accents. But what accounts for his appeal? The basic premise of Superman was that he was the boy-next-door who modestly hid away his powers until they were needed. For the nineties, Superman has had a course in assertiveness and self-esteem. The Terminator is Superman without an identity crisis—just as naturally as Lois Lane becomes a muscle-bound, gun-toting single parent. The idea of Schwarzenegger posing as a mild-mannered reporter is as ludicrous as his having to rescue his lethal Lois from any merely human evil—as opposed to the cyborg smoothie in the scary cop suit (Robert Patrick), who knits back together again when you blow him apart.

Anyway, the child as teacher goes together with the mother as father, the woman as man, and the man as machine. All anticipate the mutations to be caused by Doomsday's nuclear detritus. At one point the mother goes so far as to say that only the Schwarzenegger-robot could ever measure up as a father to her son. For a moment I thought Cameron was engaging in self-irony here, but I fear that people who make violent films with anti-violence messages take them far too seriously to have much of a capacity for irony. We must accept that the robot really is the ideal father: he is an incredibly efficient protector, can teach the boy all about guns and stuff, and he does not have to make a living and so has nothing but time. We do not remember so quickly as we do with *Regarding Henry* that this has nothing at all to do with the real world.

For that we have, as usual, to turn to the French, and our film of the month is once again, I'm afraid, subtitled. *Every Other Weekend*, by Nicole Garcia, presents Nathalie Baye as a mother who loves her children but who is just not very good at being a mother. An ex-television star from Paris, she has left the family and now makes her living by doing personal appearances in the provinces. When she gets a job as hostess of a Rotarian charity benefit at Vichy that coincides with one of her weekends to have the kids, she takes them with her. The ex-husband finds out and, claiming that this is in breach of their agreement, threatens to come and take them away from her. She panics and runs away, with the children in tow.

The rest of the film is a road picture with a lot of the diffuse and unfocused quality of the genre; but she lives a diffuse and unfocused life, and the fact that it all ends inconsequentially seems only appropriate. What keeps them going is her promise to her ten-year-old son, Vincent (Joachim Serreau), to take him to Spain in time to see a projected meteor shower that the two of them calculate is most likely to be visible there. Vincent, however, calls his father to tell him where they are, and he and the children's nanny, whom they are obviously very happy to see, catch up with them the day before the projected shower that the astronomy-mad boy is so eager to witness. The mother is left to go off into the lonely mountains by herself, and the final scene is of her walking back to the camera, obviously disappointed, as the meteors finally begin whizzing across the sky behind her. Only for a second at the end does she turn her head and see one.

A slightly hopeful ending to a depressing film, but the brief moments during it when rapport is almost re-established between the mother and her children, both still bitter about her having left them, are hard-won and not tainted by the easy sentimentality that supposes that happiness comes with escape from the constraints of the world most of us actually live in. Here is a woman who tries to escape but who fails because of the past she brings with her; here are children who, although they are very childlike in their desire, as their father says, for "order," have as much of a disabling past as adults. They grow up quickly and it is experience, not innocence, that makes them, so unhappily, tutors to a parent. □

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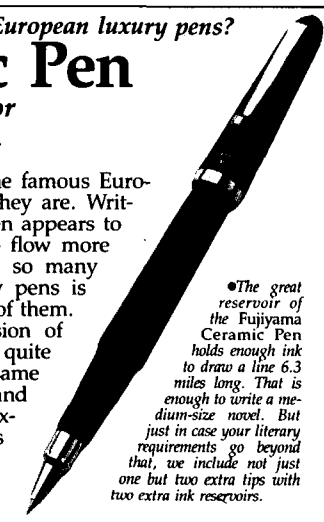

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BOOK REVIEWS

A QUESTION OF CHARACTER: A LIFE OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

Thomas C. Reeves/The Free Press/510 pp. $24.95

Paul Johnson

Contemporaries of, say, Herod the Great, Louis XIV, or Napoleon could be forgiven if they hero-worshipped monsters. How could they get access to the truth? Nor was it difficult, in our own century, for Hitler to impose himself on the Germans, and Stalin to present himself to the Russians, as guardians and savior-figures. By contrast, those of us who live in media democracies theoretically know all the facts about our elected leaders and can make informed judgments about their views, capabilities, and characters. In practice, alas, we are as easily deceived as ever; indeed, in some ways the existence of the all-powerful media actually abets the process of deception. The outstanding case of how a great democracy can be misled is that of John F. Kennedy. Thomas C. Reeves, a onetime believer in the Kennedy mythology, has come to see the real Kennedy by closely studying the published evidence. His book is by no means the last word on the subject, for much of the truth still lies concealed in inaccessible portions of the Kennedy Library (and elsewhere), and in the memories and papers of Kennedy loyalists. But it will do to get on with, and the story he tells is disturbing, both in itself and in its implications.

Oddly enough, the man who got it right at the time was that urbane British prime minister Harold Macmillan. After his first visit to the newly elected President, he was asked what it was like in Kennedy's Washington. "Oh," said he, "it's rather like watching the Borgia brothers take over a respectable North Italian city." He grasped the important point that electing a Kennedy was not so much giving office to an individual as handing over power to a family business, a clan, almost a *milieu*—with a set of attitudes about how office was to be acquired and used which at no point coincided with the American public ethic.

These attitudes were first formed by President Kennedy's maternal and paternal grandfathers, but they were honed to a kind of diabolical perfection by his appalling father, Joseph P. Kennedy, who bought an ambassadorship from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, then set himself the task of making his eldest son President. When Joseph Jr. was killed in the war, Jack became the crown prince and President-designate. He inherited his father's values in most respects, though they jostled in uneasy counterpoint with his mother's brand of superstitious Catholicism. But Jack never quite had his father's relish for money, power, and corruption. Most of his life he simply did old Joe's bidding. As he put it, ruefully: "I guess Dad has decided he's going to be the ventriloquist, so that leaves me the role of dummy." He became his own man only at the end of his first year as President, when the old monster was disabled by a stroke.

Professor Reeves's book is primarily a study in moral character, rather than politics, and that is the right approach to the Kennedy problem. The Kennedy family's system of ethics, or rather of anti-ethics, was exceptionally pervasive and it is important to note the ways in which Jack followed it, and also the few instances in which he diverged from it. Both his grandfathers were unscrupulous ward-heeling Boston politicians who well understood the connection between political power and money, though they made their piles in different ways, one through insurance, the other in the liquor trade. It was Joe Sr., however, who saw that to get national power—if not for himself, then for his sons—it was necessary to amass an enormous fortune. That meant breaking out of the narrow Boston ambit and moving to New York. It also meant grabbing opportunities, including criminal ones, as they arose. So Joe created one of the biggest cash piles of the century through banking (or perhaps one should call it money-lending), shipbuilding, Hollywood, stock jobbing, and bootleg liquor, among many other activities. He set up trust funds of $10 million apiece for his children and squirreled away vast sums for a variety of other purposes, chiefly for buying people, whether politicians, newspaper publishers, or cardinals. His range of contacts and collaborators was enormous, and included the mob leader Frank Costello and Meyer Lansky's lieutenant Doc Stacher. One can't help feeling that old Joe was actually a more interesting personality than his son—certainly a more powerful one—and one would welcome a full exploration of his business career and a detailed account of exactly what happened to his money, during his lifetime and since.

Jack rejected the family tradition in one important respect. Money did not interest him and he never troubled to learn anything about it. It was not that he was extravagant: quite the contrary. As Reeves shows, he was mean. Being a kind of royalty, he never carried money and would borrow it, if necessary, from friends, whom he rarely repaid. He underpaid both domestic servants and staffers. Indeed, parsimony to employees was one of the few characteristics he shared with his wife Jackie. Whereas he remained, in important respects, incorrigibly Boston-Irish—he had absolutely no sense of *noblesse oblige*—she was upper-class. He had gone through the motions at Choate, Princeton, and Harvard, but was basically uneducated and a thorough philistine; she was a culture snob with, on the whole, excellent taste. While he was rich, she was penniless, and, once married, she went on regular spending orgies, which of course continued after she became Mrs. Onassis. In acquiring clothes and shoes she was almost in the Imelda Marcos league. Her other yen was for endless repapering of rooms, which caused particular anguish to Jack, who hated domestic change, especially when he had to pay for it. Indeed, except as subjects for a public relations exercise, the two had virtually nothing in common.

If Jack was not interested in making money, Reeves shows that in most other respects he happily accepted the family philosophy, especially its central tenet: that the laws of God and the Republic, admirable in themselves, do not apply to Kennedys, at any rate male ones. Like his father, he dealt with gangsters when he felt inclined. Throughout his life, he lied fluently and effortlessly, or encouraged others to lie on his behalf. From the start, he was taught by his father that, freely laced with money, bluff—outright mendacity if need be—could solve all problems. The lies centered on certain areas. One was Jack's health. Old Joe had learned many tricks in concealing the true state of his retarded daughter, buried alive in a home, and he used them to gloss over the seriousness of Jack's back problems and the functional disorder eventually diagnosed as Addison's disease. Strictly speaking, Jack was never fit to hold any important office, and Reeves's list of the lies told about his body by the Kennedy camp over many years is formidable. The back pain Jack suffered seems to have increased after he became President, and his White House physician, Dr. Janet Travell, had to give him two or three daily injections of procaine. Jack eventually found this treatment intolerably painful. But he did not fire Travell, fearing that, though she had hitherto been willing to mislead the media about his health, she might now dis-

Paul Johnson's most recent book is The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815-1830 *(HarperCollins).*

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close his true medical history. Instead, he kept her on the payroll but put himself into the hands of a rogue named Dr. Max Jacobson, who later lost his medical license and was described by his nurse as "absolutely a quack." Known to his celebrity clients as "Dr. Feelgood," because of his willingness to inject amphetamines laced with steroids, animal cells, and other goodies, Jacobson started to shoot powerful drugs into Jack, once, twice, or even three times a week. Although he turned down a request to move into the White House, he had succeeded, by the summer of 1961, in making the President heavily dependent on amphetamines.

The other main area of lying centered on Jack's achievements. In 1940 his thesis was written for him by a number of people, including Arthur Krock of the *New York Times*, and Joe's personal speechwriter, who described it in its original state as "a very sloppy job, mostly magazine and newspaper clippings stuck together." Thus processed, it not only allowed Jack to graduate *cum laude* but also appeared in book form as *Why England Slept*. Old Joe and his men turned it into a "bestseller," partly by using influence with publishers such as Henry Luce, partly by buying 30-40,000 copies, which were secretly stored at Hyannis Port. It was the same story with *Profiles in Courage*, which began as a "disorganized, somewhat incoherent melange from secondary sources," and which was turned by Theodore Sorensen and a team of academic historians and professional writers into a readable book. By 1958 it had sold nearly 125,000 copies, and, after intense lobbying by Joe, Krock, and other Kennedy satraps, it won Jack the Pulitzer Prize for biography. Those who suggested the book was ghostwritten were sued for libel or even, at Joe's request, investigated by the FBI.

Joe's neatest trick was to turn Jack into a war hero. In view of Jack's health, all Joe's skill at manipulation was needed to get him into the Navy, secure him an immediate commission, and advance him in the service, especially since, while a young officer working in naval intelligence, he was spotted by the FBI having an affair with a Danish woman suspected of being a Nazi agent. In charge of a PT boat, Jack allowed it to be rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer. By rights he should have been court-martialed for losing his ship; instead, Joe's management got him a medal for rescuing a crew member. The death of Joe Jr. made the father anxious for his second son's safety, so he was promptly plucked out of the Navy by the same means he got into it—influence. Maximum use was made of Jack's war career in all his campaigns.

With the peace, Joe set about making Jack first a congressman, then a senator, then President. The young man acquiesced, and gradually his competitive spirit, strong but hitherto devoted to games, was aroused. Jack's political rise, however, was based essentially on money and corruption. It is not always clear to what extent he shared in or was even aware of his father's malpractices. Naturally, he knew of the dishonesty and lies that had made him a war hero and a literary celebrity. But getting him into the House and Senate took enormous sums of money, much of it spent openly but the rest doled out furtively by his father. Reeves lists numerous ways in which Joe made his money work. They included more or less outright bribery: in Jack's first House race, large families were given $50 in cash "to help out at the polls." As Tip O'Neill later put it, "They were simply buying votes, a few at a time, and fifty bucks was a lot of money." Opponents found they could not get a mention, or even buy space, in papers whose publishers owed Joe a favor. To get Jack into the Senate, Joe diverted one rival into the governorship race by donating a large campaign contribution, gave another to Adlai Stevenson to buy his endorsement, and loaned the editor of the *Boston Post* half a million to secure its support. Jack certainly knew about that one, since he later admitted: "You know, we had to buy that f---ing paper or I'd have been licked."

After the Senate victory Joe set his son's sights higher and, under Sorensen's guidance, a new personality began to emerge, calculated to appeal to liberals, intellectuals, and "civilized people." John MacGregor Burns was employed to manufacture a hagiography called *John F. Kennedy: A Political Profile*. Other writers ghosted a mass of articles signed by Jack and published in everything from *Look*, *Life*, and the *Progressive* to the *Georgetown Law Review*. The willingness, then and later, of intellectuals and academics of high reputation to participate in the Kennedy contrick is depressing. Self-deception can only go so far: some of them must have known they were involved in one of the biggest frauds in American political history. As Reeves puts it, "No national figure has ever so consistently and unashamedly used others to manufacture a personal reputation as a great thinker and scholar."

Did Jack, or for that matter his even more competitive-minded brother Bobby, who now played an increasing role in the campaigns, have any political convictions? Jack shared his father's reverence for the power that money brings, and the need to hang on to an unearned fortune made him a fierce anti-Communist. His instincts put him in the same camp as Senator Joe McCarthy. At one time he was on friendly terms with Richard Nixon. Later he learned to make liberal noises on some issues. But essentially he was a half-ambitious, half-reluctant, dutiful son-and-heir following the masterful demands of his father to get to the top by any means available. After all, did the Borgias need political convictions? As Tip O'Neill put it, "Looking back on his Congressional campaign, and on his later campaigns for the Senate and then for the presidency, I'd have to say that [Jack] was only nominally a Democrat. He was a Kennedy, which was more than a family affiliation. It quickly developed into an entire political party, with its own people, its own approach, and its own strategies."

By the time Jack was in the race for the Democratic nomination, then the White House, he was—or rather his people were—developing certain themes, especially the stress on youth, brains, and glamour (cortisone treatment had given him a chunkier, more handsome appearance). But he was still pushed forward primarily by money and skulduggery. His father used the full force of his fortune to break the Hubert Humphrey competition in the West Virginia primary. Cardinal Cushing later admitted that he and Joe had decided which Protestant ministers were to receive "contributions" of $100 to $500 to play down the religious issue. The money used for outright bribes came partly from the Kennedy coffers and partly from the Mafia, following a secret meeting between Jack and Sam Giancana, the Chicago godfather. FBI wiretaps and documents show that Mafia money went to pay off key election officials, including local sheriffs, who were handed a total of $50,000 to get out the Kennedy vote by any means. In return, Joe promised the mobsters assistance in federal investigations. As for the actual presidential campaign against Nixon, it is impossible now to decide whether Jack won the White House honestly. Certainly Joe persuaded Mayor Daley of Chicago to fix the result for his son in Cook County, which officially registered a huge Democrat turnout, thus giving Jack Illinois by 8,858 votes, though Nixon won 93 of the state's 102 counties. When unofficial checks of Cook ballots convinced the Republicans they had been robbed, Daley turned down an official recount. The Mafia had a hand in the vote-rigging, too.

Jack's own platform did not amount to much. Nor did he believe in some of his commitments. After presenting his farm policy to an audience in South Dakota, he said to his aides: "Well, that's over. F— the farmers after November." The so-called New Frontier package had virtually nothing in it. The "missile gap" did not exist, as Jack and his campaign people knew perfectly well. There was, of course, a lot of talk about "moral leadership," a phrase with peculiarly ironic undertones in view of Jack's personal behavior. He had the sexual morals of an alley cat.

Indeed, the one respect in which he followed his father not merely dutifully but with real enthusiasm was in the seduction and exploitation of women. Old Joe pursued women ruthlessly all his life, not hesitating to steal—or rather, use—his sons' girlfriends if he

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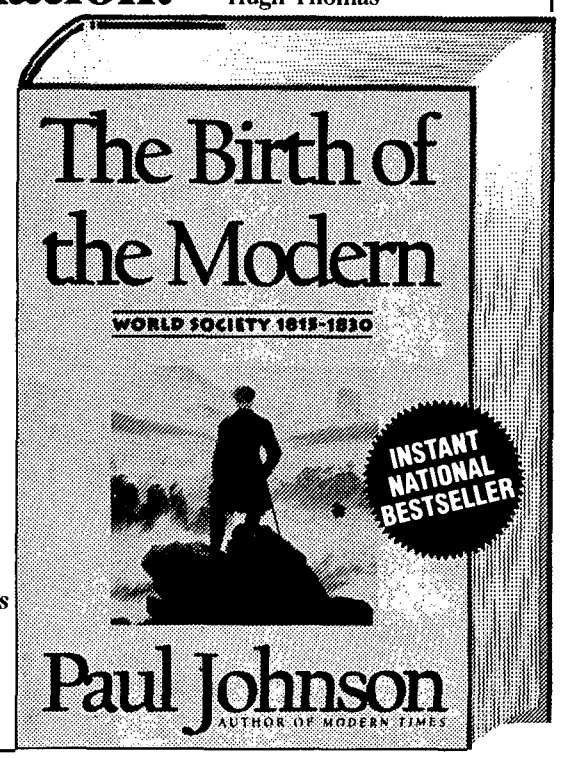

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could: co-ownership of women by different generations seems to be a feature of Kennedy sex life. Joe had employed his Hollywood power to get himself actresses and starlets, and had even possessed the redoubtable Gloria Swanson until she discovered he was buying her presents with her own money. Jack, in turn, used his political glamour to secure trophies from the movies, including Gene Tierney and Marilyn Monroe, the latter first shared with, then passed on to, Bobby. Reeves's account of the behavior of the Kennedy brothers toward Monroe, and their coverup of the traces after her sudden death, makes gruesome reading. Most of Jack's affairs, however, were brief, often lasting a matter of minutes, and conducted with whoever was available: girls without even first names, stewardesses, secretaries, campaign workers, prostitutes if need be. He claimed he required some kind of sexual encounter, however perfunctory, before he could sleep. He fornicated during the 1960 Democratic convention, throughout the campaign, and even on the night of his inauguration, after Jackie had gone to bed. His tenure at the White House was punctuated by both regular and casual affairs, sometimes in his own room when Jackie was away, sometimes in "safe" apartments, reached by tunnels under New York's Carlyle Hotel to escape observation. His conduct was reckless as well as unconscionable. He was aware that Judith Campbell was also the mistress of Sam Giancana and used her to transmit messages to the Mafia. He did not always trouble to conceal what he was doing. When two officials brought urgent secret cables to the Lincoln Bedroom one afternoon, the President flung the door open, revealing a woman in his bed, read the cables, then resumed his activities. Jackie, on her return, was liable to find strange undergarments under the pillows. Reeves is particularly shocked that on at least one documented occasion, Jack's pastimes led him to be separated from the officer who followed him with the nuclear code-box chained to his wrist. What most people will find rather more shocking is the casual heartlessness with which Jack treated all the women with whom he had dealings, including his wife. He seems to have been incapable of any kind of deep emotion.

To some extent, Jack's sexual antics and his Mafia links made him the prisoner of J. Edgar Hoover. It is impossible not to conclude from Reeves's account that Jack's presidency might well have ended in a grave public scandal rather than assassination, and that his deteriorating health and growing drug dependence could have ruled out a second term. As it was, Jack's record as President was patchy. Having few convictions of any kind and virtually no program, he reacted to, rather than shaped, events. He was inexperienced and ignorant, sometimes weak and indecisive, often ruthless, even vicious, willing to authorize murder and other illegalities, and to use the formidable powers at his command for unlawful acts of realpolitik. He left the Cuban problem as he found it, unresolved, and the Vietnam quagmire much deeper. Reeves is unable to discern any overriding pattern in his presidency, though he detects a certain growth in stature as it proceeded. That magisterial office, as has so often been demonstrated, can be greater than the human material that occupies it, and raise the man accordingly. But it can also be demeaned and that, in retrospect, is what Jack Kennedy did to it. His career shows that one of the most dangerous kinds of politician is a man who is good at public relations and nothing else. In the end, all the Kennedy presidency consisted of was the myth of Camelot, and that was essentially Jackie's—not Jack's—creation. She even gave it the name.

In view of what we know, it is amazing that Jack Kennedy's heroic reputation should have endured as long as it did—throughout the sixties and well into the seventies, in some respects into the eighties. It was enshrined in school textbooks as well as weighty academic tomes, Kennedy being well served, long after his death as throughout his career, by a legion of pliant, gullible, admiring, or corrupt writers, journalists, and academics, ranging from ill-paid hacks to august court historians. The Kennedy family machine, still rich and powerful even today, proved itself ready to twist arms, and if necessary break them, in order to sustain the mythology. Reeves lists many occasions on which material hostile to Jack Kennedy was altered or suppressed. The Kennedy phenomenon is indeed a devastating indictment of the American media's willingness to protect a favorite son and to conceal the truth from the public. It may be that the pendulum is now swinging to the opposite extreme, and there is a certain relentlessness in the way Reeves amasses material unfavorable to his subject. But in general he is fair-minded, and there can be no doubt about the substance of his indictment. The truth is, President Kennedy had no moral character, no real convictions, and no purpose other than the pursuit of power and pleasure. What he stood for was an invention, and when he fell to an assassin's bullet, nothing of significance fell with him. We have long known that, despite much conspiracy theory, his murder was purposeless and inconsequential. We now know that his life was as meaningless as his death. □

PARLIAMENT OF WHORES: A LONE HUMORIST ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN THE ENTIRE U.S. GOVERNMENT

P. J. O'Rourke/Atlantic Monthly Press/233 pp. $19.95

Daniel Wattenberg

P. J. O'Rourke is taking conservatism into the exclusive after-hours clubs of American culture, places conservatives used to get turned away from because they looked too straight: the pages of *Rolling Stone* and *Vanity Fair*, the top of the bestseller lists, and the late-night talk shows. The left would love to stop this guy quick, but they haven't quite figured out how: his writing talent makes him virtually reviewproof. His new book *Parliament of Whores* emerged virtually unscathed from the *New York Times Book Review* and the *Washington Post Book World*, usually killing fields for conservative intellectuals. But if his adversaries have despaired of making a dent in his literary reputation, they have tried everything else. First they tried to dismiss him. He was derided as "the Nazi jokester" in the *Nation* by Alexander Cockburn, a guy who thinks like a Stalinist and dresses like a hippie, making him a rare double anachronism. Then they tried character assassination: a year ago, *New Republic* deputy editor Andrew Sullivan excoriated him in *Esquire* as a racist and an opportunist. Of course, O'Rourke is no racist. His marriage alone is more integrated than any *New Republic* editorial meeting.

The latest challenge to O'Rourke's intellectual integrity and reputation is potentially the most dangerous: co-optation. Writing in the *Washington Monthly*, neoliberal pundit James Fallows, Washington editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, offers a *quid pro quo*—O'Rourke can have a respectable niche in Washington, D.C., as a thorough and open-minded reporter, if only he will just stop being so funny and so conservative:

> When he lacks reporting, [O'Rourke] falls back on wisecracks and pat attitudes, and when forced to choose between making a joke and conveying a less snappy truth, he usually goes for the laugh.

While I, too, respect O'Rourke's reportorial abilities, this is a deeply retarded statement. It is like saying, "Because Doc Gooden has never perfected his pickoff move, he has to fall back on 95-mile-an-hour sternum-high fastballs and knee-buckling curves in order to get batters out."

Happily, O'Rourke has not succumbed to the siren song of co-optation. In *Parliament of Whores*, he is very funny and very conservative—more promilitary than Ed Crane and more prosex and -drugs and -rock 'n' roll than Pat Buchanan. (On drugs, his libertarian and conservative impulses are in conflict. Unable for now to synthesize them, he has arrived at a compromise: use drugs, conservatively.)

In the congressional chapter of *Parliament of Whores*, entitled "National Busybodies," O'Rourke follows an unnamed congressman on his daily rounds. It is a grueling thirteen hours: strategy sessions, hearings, mark-ups, constituent visits, a frantic run-through of legislation with staff, a hurried perusal of outgoing mail, and, finally, two dinners on opposite sides of town. O'Rourke marvels at the politician's stamina and buoyancy:

> Myself, I was completely exhausted by 7:00 and went home, leaving the congressman, 20 years my senior, looking as animated and energetic as a full school bus—shaking hands and trading chat with governors, firemen, ambulance drivers, other congressmen, and even, at one point, his own wife.

Weekends, the congressman is back in his district doing more of the same. His staff—nine people—is not large, and his pay—$125,100 a year—is fair compensation for his exertions, "less than what a shortstop hitting .197 makes." Public outrage at the congressional pay grab and the size and cost of their staffs is unfounded. A congressman and his staff are a steal at the price:

> We Americans have struck a remarkable bargain. We pay $566,220 a year—less than a dollar apiece—for a congressman and his staff, and in return they listen to us carp and moan and fume and gripe and ask to be given things for free. Because this is, in the end, what legislators do. They listen to us. Not an enviable task.

Fallows praised this passage as an example of O'Rourke at his reportorial best. In his view, when O'Rourke takes the trouble to report a story, he confronts realities that clash with his con-

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Daniel Wattenberg is a writer for Insight *magazine.*

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servative assumptions (perhaps this is why there are so few conservative reporters?). Here, according to Fallows, O'Rourke repudiates "the official conservative line" that Congress is a "craven and unprincipled body, afraid to do anything except spend other people's money." And, having left that Heritage Foundation "Backgrounder" on Congress at home, O'Rourke has successfully "focused on the main problem: the tyranny of the politician's schedule that barely leaves anyone time for two consecutive thoughts."

Interesting: when O'Rourke brings the notebook along, he not only rejects conservative doctrine, he embraces Common Causey/good government/neoliberal doctrine. If only congressmen didn't have to spend so much time politicking and raising money and schmoozing lobbyists and mixing with the masses, they would have the repose necessary for the rational, no-preconceptions, *Washington Monthly*-style policy analysis that is sure to produce wise legislation.

Neoliberals, of course, are the salon painters of public policy. Technique is everything for them, and if they've contrived to give a congressman more time to commune with himself, they figure they've done enough reforming for one day. But in trying to claim this O'Rourke piece for neoliberalism, Fallows is barking up the wrong decision tree. The piece isn't about over-scheduling; it's about over-legislating. O'Rourke writes:

> Congress meddles in every part of American life and then some. Congressional legislation reaches beyond the grave with estate taxes and back into those clouds of glory Wordsworth says we trail when it touches upon abortion issues.

O'Rourke then provides a list of the pieces of legislation that were wending through Congress the week he reported the piece. This list of twenty-five disparate items just about reaches "the limit of the human capacity for expertise," he says. "However, it is less than 10% of what we ask of a congressman." Then he gives a list of some of the 250 other items on the congressional calendar for that week.

What O'Rourke wants is not a congressman with more time to think about legislation. He wants a congressman with less legislation to think about. For neoliberals like Fallows, the size of government is of little importance; for them the key question is, "How do we make government work?" But as a limited-government conservative, O'Rourke recognizes that beyond a certain level—long since exceeded by Congress—it's hopeless. You can't make government work. So for him the question becomes, "How do you make it stop?"

In my opinion, O'Rourke overdramatizes the burdens of a congressman. A congressman has more help than the nine members of his personal staff. He has committee staff. He has subcommittee staff. He has the bureaucrats in the executive branch, whom he bosses around as if they were his staff. Re-election rates being what they are, he enjoys enviable job security. True, he makes less than the shortstop hitting .197. But congressmen crave power above money, and power they have: no shortstop, not even Ozzie Smith, has the power to subpoena me and then berate me on network TV.

But if he lets the congressman off easy, he does so for good reasons. The first is that's just the kind of guy O'Rourke is: he genuinely felt the man was overworked and underappreciated. But more importantly, he wanted to make a point that recurs throughout the book: that limited government depends on self-government. We have only ourselves to blame if government is too big. We demand way too much from our leaders and do way too little for ourselves. That's expensive and inefficient and—what's more—it's stealing. This book exposes all of us as thieves. The old steal from the young, farmers steal from urbanites, the poor steal from the rich (and the not-so-rich), consumers steal from producers (and ultimately other consumers), and, if that doesn't cover everybody, all of us who are alive are stealing from those who haven't yet been born. O'Rourke is a non-pandering populist. Because he has developed a persona that is down-to-earth and self-effacing, he is able to castigate us for our selfishness and indolence without coming across as a high-hatting policy wonk.

In "Doing the Most Important Kind of Nothing," O'Rourke plays straight man to those incorrigible cut-ups: the Supreme Court justices. The piece is about how the Court defused the momentarily explosive debate about anti-flag burning laws. "I can't even remember what my own opinion was on the flag-burning issue, though I remember I had a strong one," O'Rourke writes.

There was an irony at the center of that debate. If you wanted to protect flag-burners, you had to argue that flag-burning was a meaningful, purposeful (and thus truly despicable) expression of hatred for America. If, on the other hand, you wanted to throw the book at flag-burners, you had to argue that flag-burning was kind of imprecise, didn't really mean much of anything, and hence was not constitutionally protected expression. O'Rourke exploits this irony to good effect, making the point that we Americans are a particularly faddish and emotional people, and we're damn lucky to have a Supreme Court to stop us from going off half-cocked and outlawing every form of thought and behavior we decide, for a fleeting moment, we don't like:

> There wouldn't even be any democracy to defend if our every national whim were put into law. We'd sacrifice the whole Constitution for those lost kids on milk cartons one week, and the next week we'd toss the Rights of Man out the window to help victims of date rape. That's why we—and the solicitor general and William Kunstler—have to take this guff from the Supreme Court.

"Poverty Policy: How to Endow Privation" unfolds a familiar argument—that poverty is culturally determined—in a dazzlingly original way, and comes to a conclusion that defies not only liberal orthodoxy about poverty but also two different strands of conservative orthodoxy. It's the best piece in the book. It's probably the best thing I've ever read on poverty. O'Rourke is a writer of exceptionally varied literary gifts, and all of them are on display here: aphoristic wit, a keen eye for detail, a narrative sixth gear, a foolish disregard for his own personal safety, a Menckenesque bullshit-detector, and a heartfelt kind of Dreiser-goes-to-the-South Bronx kind of urban poetry.

O'Rourke starts by "proving" statistically that there is no poverty in America: the amount of federal anti-poverty expenditure far exceeds the amount of money it would take to lift every poor person in the country above the poverty line. Of course, there *is* poverty, but (and here he follows the conservative line) you can't solve it by throwing money at it. Then, leafing through some old and yellowed poverty statistics, he learns that his own family was officially "poor" when he was a teenager in Ohio in the mid-sixties. Funny, they never *felt* poor. They lived in a four-bedroom house, had a power mower and a Buick, and his sisters spent their time frugging to the Dave Clark Five. And, while it would be overstating the case to say the O'Rourke family was "Glad All Over," their tidy surroundings were a far cry from the squalor O'Rourke glimpsed on the staircase of a Newark housing project. How do you have an income below the poverty line and a life above it? O'Rourke identifies the *x* factor:

> It was a narrow, stuffy, priggish world and deaf to excuses. . . . And it was a world that punished not only anti-social behavior but any deviation from the norm. My mom was not guaranteed housing by being a single mother; it almost lost her the house. A live-in boyfriend would have been out of the question for a woman who worked as a secretary at the board of education and was a member of the Monroe Street Methodist Church. . . . I wasn't given counseling for my drug use or put in a therapy program with sympathetic peers. I was threatened with loss of my scholarship, expulsion from college, arrest, and maybe even having to find a job. . . . Where I grew up you didn't have a chance to live in poverty; you couldn't afford it.

What's missing in the housing projects and the crack-houses is the Harper Valley PTA. Hunt's Point is the nadir of O'Rourke's crack-house tour of New York:

> There are parts of Hunt's Point where the actual majority of the residents are drugged

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to the eyes. Hunt's Point doesn't look much worse than other lousy neighborhoods, but the people do—dirty, skinny, disordered base-heads yelling at each other and us and people who aren't there. American slums are usually stylish. . . . But in the crack neighborhoods people are still wearing whatever they happened to have on at the moment the crack craze hit.

It's beyond bleak, because conventional answers, even conventional conservative answers, won't work. Jack Kemp won't get you there (O'Rourke expounds on the virtues of tenant management and ownership to a tenant in a New Jersey project, and the lady just keeps repeating, "I'm not going for any of that"). Neither will Bill Bennett (O'Rourke not only doubts the efficacy of arrests—he even questions whether certain drugs should be illegal). Neither will Nancy Reagan (O'Rourke quotes Guardian Angels leader Curtis Sliwa: "There's plenty of education. Everybody knows drugs are bad").

Social mores have to be enforced, and in the slums that means the Guardian Angels and "slamming and jamming." Introducing his informative and hair-raising account of a Guardian Angels raid, he explains that the Angels are more than bodyguards for little old ladies:

What Sliwa and his men intended to do was wreck the crack house—break everything breakable, rough up the patrons and take their drugs and money. The Guardian Angels call it slamming and jamming. The purpose is to show the flag of decency, to destroy the permissive atmosphere of the inner city and to provide, by main strength of hand, the social opprobrium missing in the slums. The Guardian Angels are trying to enforce the kind of propriety, the mores, that were usual in American society, at every income level, twenty-five years ago. . . . But modern society has become so lawless and screwy that the Guardian Angels have had to start a street gang to teach people decorum.

Since O'Rourke has been criticized (Fallows again) for falling back on pat conservative remedies, it's worth asking whether the Angels are a "conservative" answer. Law-and-order conservatives generally rely on police powers (more arrests, tougher sentences, walking the due-process cat back to 1965) for answers to the drugs/poverty/crime tangle. While they aren't opposed to Angels-style community-based action, they have been slow to grasp its importance. So it's unfair to say O'Rourke is a prisoner of conservative doctrine in this area—I think he's in its vanguard.

The account of the Angels is an example of the high-adventure reporting on wild, violent, unfathomably different places that O'Rourke has made his own. There is less of that in this book than in his *Holidays in Hell*, and I found myself missing it. But a book about Washington and public policy and ideas will inevitably be more sedate than one about murder and mayhem in the Third World. His humor, too, is evolving into something more cerebral and sophisticated. Books like *Modern Manners* and *Republican Party Reptile* bore some traces of *National Lampoon* humor (O'Rourke used to edit it)—stuff one rung up the humor ladder from barf-and-booger jokes. These vestiges have largely disappeared, and O'Rourke seems to have found a balance that will win him *Public Interest* readers without alienating his *Rolling Stone* faithful.□

SILENT COUP: THE REMOVAL OF A PRESIDENT

Len Colodny and Robert Gettlin/St. Martin's Press/507 pp. $24.95

Herbert E. Meyer

So many self-proclaimed "investigative reporters" have written books during the last few years that the formula for this kind of book is now down pat: Pick a well-known public scandal, expose what everyone thinks happened as a tissue of lies, then reveal the astonishing but true story behind the headlines. The author's tone should be dogged, righteous, tough-as-nails but with a soft spot for the one protagonist who was thought to have been a villain but who—surprise!—turns out not to have been so bad after all.

The problem with books like these is that it is utterly beyond a reader's capacity—even one who dutifully tracked the scandal as it unfolded—to evaluate the author's revelations and conclusions. The material itself is always so complicated and presented so breathlessly, and the author's interpretations based so extensively on the substance and nuance of every previously published account, that only an acknowledged, impartial authority on this particular scandal could begin to sort it all out.

The publisher's dilemma is how to stampede readers into buying the book before the experts have had a chance to pronounce on it and, perhaps, buy it. The reader's dilemma is whether to wait for the experts' judgments—by which time the book may no longer be hot, or even available—or to succumb to the publisher's hype, buy a copy, then jump in and wallow in the scandal one more time for the sheer fun of it, without any hope of seriously coming to grips with the authors' claims.

The latest such book is *Silent Coup*, Len Colodny and Robert Gettlin's version of the 1972 Watergate break-in, its cover-up, and the ensuing political avalanche that buried President Nixon in August 1974. The book is chock-full of allegations and judgments, of which these seem to be the most important:

- President Nixon's "obsessive secrecy," his decision to cut the military out of major decisions on the Vietnam war, and his plan to sign arms treaties and improve relations with the Soviet Union and China, caused the Joint Chiefs of Staff to view Nixon as "out of control" and led to a military spying operation inside the White House.
- Between 1970 and 1971 this espionage operation funneled information to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Thomas Moorer, in an effort to uncover the secret actions of both Nixon and Henry Kissinger, at the time Nixon's national security adviser.
- Alexander Haig, at the time Kissinger's NSC deputy, had "important relationships" with the spy ring's participants and helped facilitate the flow of information to the Joint Chiefs.
- When Nixon learned that he and Kissinger were targets of a military spy ring, the President decided to do nothing about it—a decision the authors claim later contributed "directly and substantially" to Nixon's resignation.
- Bob Woodward, who with Carl Bernstein led the *Washington Post*'s Watergate team and later authored *All The President's Men*, served as a naval officer during the 1960s and in 1970 under some of the same senior officers later involved in the spy ring, and during this time he routinely briefed Haig at the White House. Thus Woodward and Haig had a close relationship never before known by the public.
- The two Watergate break-ins were the brainchild of John Dean, as part of an unauthorized investigation to determine whether any high-level Democrats patronized a call-girl ring headquartered across the street from the Democratic National Committee's offices. The generally held view, that the break-ins were ordered to get information on an alleged relationship between DNC Chairman Lawrence O'Brien and Howard Hughes, is simply false.
- The madam of this call-girl ring was the friend and sometime roommate of Maureen Biner, then Dean's girlfriend and later his wife.
- Shortly before the second, ill-fated Watergate break-in, Dean used a pretext to bring federal prosecutors to the White House so he could copy an address book they had seized from a young lawyer involved in the call-girl ring. The book contained Dean's girlfriend's name and her call-girl ring code name: Clout.
- Watergate was a John Dean operation all the way, spawned by his efforts to advance his career by obtaining sexual dirt on Democrats and made possible by his girlfriend's relationship with the aforementioned madam. John Mitchell, attorney general and then head of Nixon's re-election committee, was innocent of the crimes and was duped by Dean into believing that a cover-up was necessary to protect the President who, Dean told Mitchell, *was* involved.
- As the Watergate affair began to unravel, Haig repeatedly concealed critical information from the President and "took other actions" that seriously damaged Nixon. Haig did all this in part to hide the truth about the Joint Chiefs' spy ring and his connection to it.
- Haig himself was "Deep Throat."

In sum, Nixon, and to a lesser extent Attorney General John Mitchell, were the victims of a double-whammy: Haig

Herbert E. Meyer, author of Real-World Intelligence, *served during the Reagan Administration as special assistant to the director of central intelligence and vice chairman of the CIA's National Intelligence Council.*

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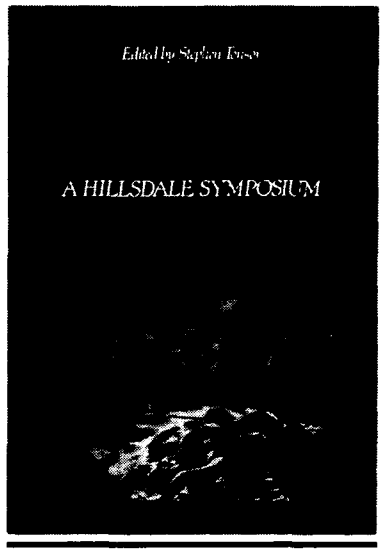

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working to protect himself and the military, along with Dean maneuvering to protect himself and his bride. Working separately but along parallel tracks, Haig and Dean forced Nixon to resign the Presidency two years after his 1972 landslide re-election.

No question about it, this is an attention-grabbing collection of allegations and judgments. But are the allegations true? And are the judgments that flow from them valid?

Overall, *Silent Coup* rests on the hypothesis that Richard Nixon was an innocent, befuddled chief executive who was hopelessly out of his depth in Washington and thoroughly out-maneuvered by Al Haig and all those military sharpies at the Pentagon, who themselves got an unexpected boost from an ambitious little creep of a White House lawyer, who also ran political and legal circles around Nixon. You can believe this if you want to. I don't.

More important, neither does Stephen E. Ambrose, the distinguished historian and author of highly regarded multi-volume biographies both of Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon. Writing in the *New York Times Book Review* on June 23, Ambrose concludes:

> To call Mr. Nixon an innocent victim of plots engendered, directed and carried out by two men who were not even in communication with each other, grossly distorts the politics of Watergate and displays a stunning ignorance of how the government under Mr. Nixon operated.

Ambrose supports his view by citing the transcripts of Watergate tapes released by the National Archives on June 4 of this year, one month *after* the publication of *Silent Coup*. In a conversation on April 26, 1973, H. R. Haldeman spelled out for Nixon—for *Nixon*—how money moved from Mitchell to E. Howard Hunt's lawyer. Haldeman goes on to quote Mitchell saying, in reference to Hunt's demand for money, "It's taken care of." As Ambrose points out, this demolishes *Silent Coup*'s allegation that Nixon and Mitchell were not involved in raising money to buy silence from the Watergate burglars.

And in a taped conversation on January 8, 1973, Ambrose reports, Nixon complains to Charles Colson, his special counsel, that they failed to get any information from the many bugs placed by G. Gordon Liddy and Hunt around Washington. To which Colson replies: "Well, apparently we did, of course, at Watergate, mainly on Hughes." So much for *Silent Coup*'s core allegation that the Watergate break-ins were a John Dean operation with the sole intention of gathering sexual dirt on top level Democrats. Indeed, the tape suggests powerfully that Nixon personally was involved up to his elbows—which, if true, demolishes *Silent Coup*'s central thesis that an innocent Nixon was done in by his various subordinates.

To be sure, some of *Silent Coup*'s allegations may turn out to be accurate. Woodward and Haig may well have had a long-standing and hitherto secret professional relationship. And Dean may well have acted on his idiotic idea to provide the Republicans with political advantage by finding information that would compromise leading Democrats, based on his knowledge of that call-girl ring with whose madam Dean's girlfriend and later wife sometimes roomed. Certainly *Silent Coup*'s allegation is true that top-level military officers were going nuts back in 1970 and 1971 to find out what Nixon and Kissinger were up to. But to call what they did "spying" is to reveal an appalling ignorance of just how bureaucratic hardball gets played in Washington's major league.

In sum, *Silent Coup* is a mess, with allegations and judgments flying all over the place. Some may hold up—I vote for the Woodward-Haig connection—but ultimately the whole thing crashes into a wall of contrary evidence and common sense. No doubt the Nixon White House harbored more than a few unscrupulous political operatives, not to mention an unusually high quotient of creeps, weirdos, jerks, idiots, and fools. But every single one of these men was there at the pleasure of the President. And as the hours and hours of Oval Office tapes make clear, this President knew very well what was going on. Whether what he did was sufficiently awful to justify his resignation, and whether the media and the Democratic-controlled Congress used Watergate to destroy a President whose politics they despised, are questions that *Silent Coup* ignores.

Silent Coup's fast rise onto the best-seller lists is less a reflection on the public's continuing interest in Watergate than a result of the publisher's hype job to draw readers before the book's flaws could emerge. But if the usual pattern of books like these prevails—Bob Woodward's own *Veil* is a classic example—exposure of these flaws will send *Silent Coup*'s sales plummeting.

For despite its fleeting commercial success *Silent Coup* has failed to trigger anything even remotely resembling a national flap. In fact, the book's sensational charges have generated less controversy than, say, the question of whether to exhume Zachary Taylor's body in hopes of learning whether that poor devil died of natural causes or was poisoned. This may well be because the public no longer thinks the Nixon years are worth very much attention; Nixon himself is settling into a minor niche in history, and were it not for his resignation, he would become as obscure to future generations as, well, Zachary Taylor.

After all, irrespective of Watergate, the Nixon years were marked by social stress, economic weakness, and military defeat. Match that against Ronald Reagan's extraordinary domestic and foreign achievements, and against George Bush's great military victory in the Persian Gulf. These are the presidencies that will be studied and argued about for generations to come. In any case, future historians looking back at the Nixon years likely will focus not on Watergate but on Vietnam, and on how an administration led by a President purported to be such a hard-headed, global-minded geo-strategist—and supported by a national security adviser/secretary of state with an equally exalted reputation—somehow led the world's most powerful nation to military defeat. They won't learn much from *Silent Coup*. □

AMERICA'S PURPOSE: NEW VISIONS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Edited by Owen Harries/ICS Press/175 pp. $19.95

Michael Chapman

It wasn't long after Germans took their sledgehammers to the Berlin Wall that our foreign policy establishment began asking, and attempting to answer, the inevitable post-Cold War question: What do we do now?

The effort to define America's role in a world without the threat of Communism provoked a lively debate in the nation's op-ed pages and foreign policy journals: Should the United States come home and let the rest of the world fend for itself? Should we be "realistic" and base our foreign policy purely on what is thought to be in the national interest? Or should we continue to "wage democracy" in the tradition of Woodrow Wilson and John Kennedy?

Although the debate is by no means over, it has crystallized around the three philosophical traditions that have characterized U.S. foreign policy at one time or another—isolationism, realism, and democratic idealism. Editor Owen Harries has captured the essence of this debate in *America's Purpose: New Visions of U.S. Foreign Policy*, a collection of essays originally published in the *National Interest* by sixteen mostly (though not exclusively) conservative thinkers.

Those offering direction include Charles Krauthammer, Irving Kristol, Patrick Buchanan, Ben Wattenberg, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and Congressman Stephen Solarz. A few of the pieces are a bit eccentric: Senator Malcolm Wallop, for example, suggests in soaring rhetoric that America's purpose is to become a "spacefaring" nation and conquer the "lofty horizons" of the universe, but fails to tell taxpayers where he would find the billions of dollars necessary to pay for this endeavor. Most, however, offer more earthly and cogent prescriptions.

Not all of these views, of course, held up so well when Saddam Hussein provoked the first crisis of the post-Cold War world. The Gulf conflict appears to have dealt a lethal blow to right-wing isolationism, as presented by Patrick Buchanan in his fevered essay, "America First—and Second, and Third." Despite dire warnings that George Bush was leading the country to a political and military disaster for no good reason, there is scant evidence to indicate that the isolationist arguments against going to war with the Iraqi tyrant persuaded many Americans. (Although its spokesmen are notably absent in this book, the same can be said of left-wing isolationists, including those in the Democratic party. In fact, the Gulf crisis merely reaffirmed the inability of the far left ever to countenance the use of force, even when our vital interests are at stake and we are faced with an undisputed villain.)

But if isolationism emerged from the Persian Gulf chastened, can it be dismissed entirely, as a spent force? Krauthammer, Wattenberg, and Josef Joffe make the convincing intellectual case against isolationism—much of it vindicated during the Gulf crisis—by arguing that the United States is too politically, economically, and militarily integrated with the rest of the world to retreat into a "Fortress America." Moreover, most Americans (though certainly not all) recognize the vital importance of American power and leadership in international crises.

But it is one thing to win the intellectual argument and quite another to over-

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Michael Chapman is foreign policy assistant to Rep. Dave McCurdy (D-Okla.).

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come the isolationist temperament which, despite the brief enthusiasm for the Gulf War, still has a nostalgic allure for many Americans. This is particularly true when appeals to this sentiment are couched in terms of "realism" and the "national interest," as they were at the end of the war, when President Bush initially refused to stop Saddam Hussein's slaughter of the Kurds in the interest of maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity. This bloodless act of realpolitik must have come as a welcome relief for Kristol, Peregrine Worsthorne, and other proponents of realism. As Kristol argued at the time, to have come to the aid of the Kurdish women and children would have been a signal that moral purpose, not mere self-interest, was again directing our foreign policy. While it was proper to feel sorry for the Kurds, their plight was simply "bad luck," and we had no business attempting to correct it.

If this was a classic example of realism's triumph, however, the junior Metternichs have little cause for smug satisfaction. In the span of ten years, the United States has, under the banner of national interest, bolstered Saddam Hussein in his war with Iran, destroyed much of his country in one of the largest and most impressive military operations in history, and finally, in cooperation with another dictatorship, Saudi Arabia, refrained from effectively toppling the Ba'ath regime—only to see it remain a menacing presence in the Middle East and send the United Nations on a wild-goose chase in search of nuclear weapons materials.

As American troops were setting up refugee camps and dropping food to the pleading Kurds, the *Wall Street Journal* was moved to argue that "realpolitik is not so readily separated from national values, from a country's common idea of itself." What, then, of those who contend that the expansion of democracy should be the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War era? Although they have been unfairly accused by both isolationists and realists of promoting a messianic crusade, Wattenberg, Carl Gershman, and other internationalists (including Joshua Muravchik in his recent book, *Exporting Democracy: Fulfilling America's Destiny*[1]) make the compelling case that encouraging the expansion of democracy is, in fact, in the national interest. A more democratic world would be good for America, since democracies are naturally more amicable toward the United States; they are less inclined to threaten their neighbors and, as freely elected entities, more likely to possess the popular legitimacy necessary for domestic stability and economic prosperity.

Strengthening democratic movements where and when conditions are ripe need not be done mindlessly, or without regard to financial burdens. By practicing a policy consistent with American values and making intelligent decisions about what activities—carried out by organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy, the U.S. Information Agency, and the Agency for International Development—will help move a country toward democracy, the United States can conduct a democratic foreign policy for far less than it has cost to contain Communism.

Finally, if the last ten years have revealed anything, it is that advancing democracy is hardly an arrogant, foolhardy attempt to remake the world in America's image. The peoples of Eastern Europe, Latin America, and—to an increasing extent—Africa, the Soviet Union, and Asia have embraced democracy willingly and enthusiastically without coercion by the United States.

For the democratic idealists, the problem is that the construction of a *Pax Democratica* must figure prominently in the ideas, policies, and platforms of our political leadership. Despite an occasional rhetorical overture, the sad fact is that there are few figures of major political significance willing to bear the democratic torch.

On this point, at least, isolationists, realists, and democratic idealists would likely agree. □

[1]AEI Press, 259 pp. $24.95.

IF I STOP I'LL DIE: THE COMEDY AND TRAGEDY OF RICHARD PRYOR

John A. Williams and Dennis A. Williams
Thunder's Mouth Press/234 pp. $19.95

Joe Queenan

Whether its subject is Eastern European totalitarianism, Watergate, colitis, the rise and fall of Freddie Prinze, or Sudanese irrigation projects, no genuinely awful book can be deemed completely idiotic unless it contains at least one passing reference to "the banality of evil" and "bad faith."

John A. Williams and Dennis A. Williams are aware of this dictum, and they dutifully cite both Hannah Arendt and Jean-Paul Sartre in their magically stupid new book. But just to be on the safe side, they have also referred to Aristophanes (the Greek comic playwright), Plautus (the Roman Neil Simon), and intellectual heavy hitters on the order of George Meredith, Mark Twain, James Fenimore Cooper, and Gregory Peck. All this in a biography of the now-fading stand-up comic, movie star, cokehead, weapons-code violator, and failure-to-pay-child-supporter Richard Pryor.

I'm impressed.

If I Stop I'll Die: The Comedy and Tragedy of Richard Pryor is a bad, pretentious book that fails to do justice to one of the funniest people America has produced. Written by a father-and-son team (the older Williams, John, is the author of such novels as *The Man Who Cried I Am*, while son Dennis is a former *Newsweek* reporter), the book attempts to explain how Pryor, a militant child of the civil rights movement, who built his reputation by bringing the ghetto into America's living rooms, could end up making so many dreadful movies in which he incarnated the very same racial stereotypes that he ridiculed on stage: the hustler, the con man, the pimp.

Joe Queenan is a frequent contributor to Barron's *and other publications.*

The authors conclude that white Hollywood, and, by extension, all of society, is responsible for Pryor's appearance in such numskulled films as *Dynamite Chicken, Car Wash, Greased Lightning, Wholly Moses, Bustin' Loose, The Toy, Harlem Nights*, and *Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling*. This, of course, is the same white society that held a gun to John Belushi's head and forced him to appear in *Caddyshack, Animal House*, and *1941*, the same white society that forced Chevy Chase to make twenty bad movies, Dan Aykroyd eighteen, Bill Murray twelve and counting. The authors are correct in accusing Hollywood potentates of refusing to make intelligent movies. But they are incorrect in accusing them of doing this because they are racists. They do this because they are morons.

Pryor achieved renown in the sixties and early seventies with hilarious routines about Richard Nixon's first day in an all-black prison, or a wino meeting Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, or a black drunk giving a black junkie advice on how to impress white people. On albums such as *Bicentennial Nigger* and *Is It Something I Said?*, Pryor tore into everything and everybody—ghetto preachers, rock stars, heroin addicts, Republicans—but very little of Pryor's high-energy comedy comes through in the Williamses' dour book.

There are, first off, the recurrent tragedies and upheavals in Pryor's own life: his grandmother ran a bordello; his mother may have worked as a prostitute. Pryor himself sired and abandoned a child while still in his teens, nearly killed himself in a 1980 accident while freebasing cocaine, and lately has been stricken by multiple sclerosis. The comic has gone through wives the way some people go through socks, and has clearly been disappointed by his failure to attain the kind of wealth, acclaim, artistic independence, and overall power achieved by Bill Cosby and Eddie Murphy. But again, we come back to the same point: there are no laws on the books forcing adults to appear in movies with names like *You've Got to Walk It Like You Talk It or You'll Lose That Beat*. If Pryor ended up losing that beat, it was because of his failure to walk it like you talk it. Or walk it like he talks it. Or something.

Let's get some historical perspective on this. Since 1968, Pryor has appeared in forty-one films, almost all of which are absolutely dreadful. The notable exceptions are *Richard Pryor: Live on the Sunset Strip*, a 1982 release that captures the comic's brilliance as a live performer, and passable commercial fare such as *Silver Streak, Uptown Saturday Night, Superman III*, and *Stir Crazy*. In none of the commercial films does Pryor strike the viewer as a surpassingly talented actor; he simply gives the impression of being a black Bob Hope or Bill Murray—a funny man doing an adequate job in a profession that is not his true calling. So while it's easy to understand the use of the word "comedy" in the book's title, it is less easy to understand the use of the word "tragedy." Are we supposed to think Pryor is a tragic figure because he never got to play Othello? This isn't Paul Robeson we're talking about here. This isn't James Earl Jones we're talking about here. This isn't Raymond St. Jacques we're talking about here. Hell, Billy Dee Williams can out-act this guy.

Finally, for a pair of devotees who claim to be hooked on Pryor's down-home comedic style, the Williamses are anything but loose. Consider this passage, in which they discuss syntactical nuances in the work of the iconoclastic stand-up comic:

> The double negative flourished in writing as well as in speech, an example of which is Pryor's "I don't wanna be no accident!" The intransitive verb, *be*—to exist not only in actuality, but also in a specific place and time—became the hippest way to use the verb *am*. "I be walking" was more powerful—and picturesque—than "I am walking." Two or three words were converted to one: "What is happening?" yielded "What's happening?"—which was finally rendered as "Zappening?"

I be impressed. □

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CALL ME A DOCTOR: TALES OF SIX MEDICAL MEN WHO WENT ELSEWHERE AND DID OTHER THINGS

Jack Griffitts, M.D./The American Spectator/244 pp. $15.95

Shawn Miller

Doc Graham, the small-town physician from Minnesota in the mythical film *Field of Dreams*, is a piece of Americana. Played regally by Burt Lancaster, the good doctor is the epitome of a community pillar. He is upstanding: "No screwing, no drinking, no opium, no midnight abortions." He is good-hearted: "There were times children could not afford eyeglasses. . . . and without any fanfare a pair of eyeglasses would find their way into that child's pocket." He is profound: "If I'd only been a doctor for five minutes, now that would have been a tragedy."

He is also boring. As any good writer knows, there is nothing quite as dull as perfection. The six doctors Jack Griffitts examines in *Call Me A Doctor* are definitely not perfect. As Griffitts, an M.D. himself, writes in the foreword, "They were intelligent, impulsive, brave, daring, and somehow wrong." Wrong in the sense that, although they could have provided care and support to the communities around them, they chose to abandon such a life to follow other pursuits, most of which had little to do with medicine.

Griffitts's subjects, each one given his own chapter, managed to circle the well of history without ever falling in. They include James D. Long, a War of 1812 veteran who led an ill-fated invasion of Spanish Texas in 1819; James Wilkinson, a comrade of Washington's at Valley Forge and an infamous governor of the Louisiana territory, who helped Aaron Burr down the road to disrepute; William Walker, who established himself as President of Nicaragua in 1857, only to be wrenched from control by an annoyed U.S. government; Leander Starr Jameson, confidante of Cecil Rhodes at the turn of the century, when the British and the Afrikaners duked it out over control of South Africa; General Leonard A. Wood, one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders, and almost the twenty-eighth President of the United States; and Frederick A. Cook, who beat Admiral Peary in the 1907 race to discover the North Pole.

Griffitts could just as easily have named the book "Don't Call Me a Doctor, Please." Only Cook seemed to look upon medicine as a gratifying pastime, and even he constantly left his practice for his arctic forays. When Jameson accepted Rhodes's offer to help the diamond baron build an African federation modeled after the U.S., the doctor wrote his brother, "I close the books on my medical career. Sorry in a way, but I've gotten into too restless a way of life to settle down." Walker was crushed by his inability to save his mother and his wife from disease, and no doubt saw himself as somewhat of a failure. Wilkinson, who appears to have taken the hypocritical instead of the Hippocratic oath, was a slave to his ego who secretly wanted doctors to wear colorful uniforms to set them apart from the peons, and chose the mercantile trade over medicine to enrich himself during the Revolutionary War. Andrew Jackson had to order Long, his medicine man in the Creek Nation Indian battles, to stop leaving his post at the camp to get in on the fighting.

Jackson is one of the many historical figures who make cameo appearances, and it is Griffitts's incorporation of such guest stars that adds a creative touch to the tales. "Where sources were thin I took the liberty of using my imagination," the reader is forewarned. The chapter on Wood is presented as the report of a young doctor watching over the aging general before an operation that will take his life. Through the pen of this naif we get to hear Colonel George Patton, on a visit to Wood, complain, "The Philippinos [sic]—savage, questionable Christians, and Moslems by professed faith—defy the concept of self-government," and learn how Wood inadvertently started the now-ancient Georgia-Georgia Tech football rivalry.

Call Me A Doctor relies on this mixture of imagination and fact to humanize the characters. Understanding that historical figures should be judged as of their time and not ours, Griffitts stays away from the political ramifications of some of the events he describes. Rhodes and Jameson, both carriers of Kipling's "white man's burden," are portrayed as ambitious adventurers, not men who helped lay the groundwork for South Africa's policy of apartheid. Four years ago, Alex Cole made a movie about Walker's exploits that linked the doctor's actions to Reagan's Central American policies with the subtlety of a sledgehammer and the political sense of Amy Carter; Griffitts attempts to interpret Walker and the others as human beings, not symbols.

The failings of these six doctors, and they had many, came from the part of their psyche that wouldn't allow them to be Doc Grahams and spend their lives in Chisholm, Minnesota, delivering babies and platitudes. They lived in a time when Manifest Destiny was foreign policy and not cultural propaganda, and, for the most part, acted accordingly. □

Shawn Miller is The American Spectator*'s editorial intern.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 7)

with U.S. government subsidies. Maybe they should get back to basketball.

This brought to mind an article I read a few months back in an education journal. The character string

s'he

kept appearing and its persistence ruled out a typo. It was used grammatically where one would normally see the pronoun "he" and I became curious and called the journal's editor, whose secretary told me that it was the author's way of eliminating *gender-based language*. It was an elision of "she/he." I followed this up with a letter—unanswered as yet—asking what we will do if the *its* come up with enough sympathy to become worrisome; could we expect the grammarians of the elite left to turn to

s'h'it?

I know y'all are anxiously awaiting developments in these matters; I'll keep you posted.

—Bob Hamilton
Denton, Texas

The Animal Right

As a vegetarian, a supporter of animal rights, and a long-time *American Spectator* reader, I am becoming increasingly annoyed at the gratuitous swipes at those who care for animals which are offered almost monthly in your magazine. There were at least two in the May issue: (1) WP's attack on a vegetarian student who refused to compromise her principles just to go to Japan. (Perhaps WP thinks that compromise of one's principles is a good thing.) (2) P. J. O'Rourke's equation of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals with ACT-UP, and his suggestion that it (PETA) was helping to destroy "the entire fabric of American society." Last month RET lashed out at those who take exception to the torture of animals in the name of science. The examples could easily be multiplied.

Animal rights supporters, or at least this one, are not anti-capitalist, anti-defense, anti-science, anti-human, or anti-American. What we are for is Justice, and its extension to animals. Until now, I haven't felt that there was a contradiction between this view and being a member of the Republican party, but *TAS* may yet convince me otherwise.

—Dennis Mangar
Redwood Valley, California

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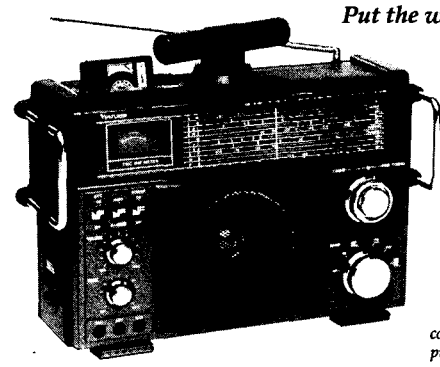

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CURRENT WISDOM

New York Times

Food for thought from the Reagan White House's most eloquent software, as transcribed by her pal, Maureen Dowd:

"Inside those blue pinstriped suits, crisp white shirts and red-striped ties, beat the hearts of men who are utterly at the mercy of the lunar tides and utterly affected by the vapors and by an almost feline desire to look man-to-man at one's enemy and scratch his little eyes out," Peggy Noonan, who wrote speeches for both Ronald Reagan and George Bush, said in an interview. In her memoir, "What I Saw at the Revolution," Ms. Noonan complained that groups of men in politics become infected with "testosterone poisoning." Last week she defined the malady as "When a guy gets so pumped up, red-faced and swollen with the testosterone-induced enjoyment of power that he begins to do strange things, and begins to take aggressive actions that he would not take under normal circumstances."

[June 30, 1991]

Monthly Planet

In the little-known house organ of the Santa Cruz County Nuclear Weapons Freeze, the infelicitously named Miss Sandra Wong makes a revolutionary declaration certain to earn her the Medal of Freedom when Rep. Pat Schroeder is finally elected President of the United States of America and Iraq:

I am writing this letter because I believe the time has come for women as a gender to fully take on equal rights and also take some of the blame for the current water crisis that has been a part of our daily lives for the past five years. Many people, in fact most people who will read this, will think that I am off my rocker, but if you bear with me (males), and if you try this (females), we will save untold gallons of water, expedite the process and create a more sanitary environment.

What I am talking about is the fact that every time a woman uses the restroom she flushes the toilet using between five and eight gallons of water as opposed to every time a man uses a urinal he uses only a gallon or two. What I am proposing is that women begin using the urinals that are already equipped in the dual-sex restrooms in restaurants, nightclubs, school dormitories and other places where they might be found, and that the private sector begin installing them in existing female restrooms.

The majority of the population feels that this is absolutely impossible, a female standing to urinate, but in reality, it is a rather easy thing to do. Almost every woman on earth at some time has wished she could accomplish this. I, myself, have been doing it since my mother taught me as an alternative to "hovering" when I was about five years old. You do not need devices such as a funnel and no artificial prosthetic apparatus either. Your God-given anatomy is all you need.

[July 1991]

Los Angeles Times

A New Age super-patriot sounds off on the op-ed page of the Golden State's *Times*:

At a recent fifth-grade promotion ceremony, I felt compelled to go through the motions of flag pledging, to go so far as to say the words, because I thought the joy of the day was more important than my feelings about the flag. So I stood, crossed my heart and said the pledge, mentally editing as I went along.

"I acknowledge the flag of the United Racist States of America and to the repression for which it stands, two or three bifurcated nations, two economies, two healthcare systems, two nations under God, divisible by color, class, gender and access, with liberty for some and justice for fewer.". . .

In the fifth grade I pledged the flag. By the ninth grade, I wanted to burn it.

[June 25, 1991]

Las Vegas Review-Journal

Moral rebirth in a desert Shangri-la:

I read the *Review-Journal*'s 15-line news brief about how that noble Nevada institution, the Chicken Ranch, will be marketing and selling men's and women's T-shirts, golf shirts, sweats and caps with its logo. Also, brothel whores, called "working ladies," will be posing in "period" costumes for an 18-month calendar. Now wouldn't that look nice hanging on your kitchen wall? How quaint.

Would some of our state legislators in Carson City wake up? I'm so ashamed of this "progressive" attitude of my native state that I keep a car licensed in Arizona with which I take trips out of state so I'm not laughed out of other regions. The people who would sell their mothers and grandmothers for money have placed a black mark on the beautiful state of Nevada and it's a darn shame.

—Claire Loring Henderson

Recently, your newspaper ran a little blurb about how the Chicken Ranch whorehouse is planning to market clothing items and its own calendar, featuring its working "ladies."

Hello, hello? Is anyone in Carson City paying attention? It's bad enough that we have this stain on the state, and now the whoremasters want to market items with advertising on them? This is outrageous. Why was this enterprise even mentioned in the *R-J*? Is this one of those inquiring-minds-want-to-know scams? It isn't funny.

—Kenneth C. Jones Las Vegas

Actually, this whole whore business is getting to me. Did all those working ladies wake up one morning when they were children, look into the mirror, and say, "When I grow up, I want to be a whore in Nevada"? We who are natives are ashamed.

—John Bernard Laughlin

[July 14, 1991]

Washington Post

Appalling conditions from life in a macho hellhole:

Women at the *St. Petersburg Times* say they are forced to work in a sexist atmosphere in which lewd comments, discrimination and even girlie pinups are a fact of newsroom life. In a recent report to management detailing their grievances, the women at the Florida paper say that:

- "Colleagues feel they can talk freely about women's bodies and their bodily functions—in front of the women."
- One male supervisor told a pregnant staffer, "Your breasts are really getting huge." Another told a woman that "she'll have to choose between being a mommy and being a journalist." A third man told a woman reporter she was getting raises because another manager "has the hots for her."
- One woman said, "*Times* management has become precisely the kind of exclusive, all-white, all-male club that we lambast on our editorial pages."
- Women who complain have been dismissed as a "lesbian clique."
- While several section editors and an assistant managing editor are women, virtually all top management jobs are held by white men. Only one of the company's 12 directors is a woman.
- Men routinely get better assignments.

[July 20, 1991]

Time

Flapdoodle *vivace* from Barbara Ehrenreich, dissident and essayist for *Time*, an underground organ of the Yuppie Revolutionary Front:

In fact, dissidence ought to be regarded as one of our finest traditions and proudest exports to the world. The feminist movement began here and spread throughout the world. Our civil rights movement has inspired the downtrodden in dozens of nations, and gay rights was practically invented here. Jefferson, I daresay, would be proud.

[July 8, 1991]

Congressional Record

God's surprisingly trendy dream, as translated from the original rumbles by guest chaplain to the United States Senate, the very pretty Rev. Catherine Schuyler of Ponckhockie Union Church, Kingston, New York:

O God of justice, we pray for Your children who are poor, for families without a roof over their heads, for babies who will go to sleep tonight without a decent meal. Give us wisdom and compassion to use the power and gifts given each of us to act courageously on their behalf.

We remember especially today our sisters throughout the Nation who struggle against injustice in our society. We celebrate Your hand as it works through groups which encourage women to recognize their potential and which call all Your people, men and women alike, to treat one another with the respect due to children of God. Yet as we celebrate, we know, too, that the struggle continues. Open our hearts and our minds to see the sexism and racism in our society. Work with us and within us that we might be part of transforming this world into the world that You have envisioned for us, our lives into the lives for which You have created us, where women and men and bricklayers and stockbrokers live as equal partners, where nation does not lift up sword against nation, and where children teach us to live in peace with one another. . . . Amen.

[July 11, 1991]

New York Times

In the century of the Lindbergh transatlantic flight, the first four-minute mile, *The Kinsey Report*, the Apollo space series, and the Carter Presidency, still more history is made, this time by the endearingly *farfelu* Miss Karen Bennett:

As she put out the popcorn and potato chips in her living room, Karen Bennett said she believed this was going to be the first party ever held to watch a gallbladder operation. That is a difficult claim to verify. But at the very least it was the first party ever held to watch Karen Bennett's gallbladder operation.

"I can't exactly say I'm excited about it," said Meg Marshall, one of the first guests to arrive at Ms. Bennett's home in the suburb of Wantagh, L.I., on Wednesday evening. "But I am looking forward to it. Normally I hate looking at other people's home movies, but this will be different.". . .

As the camera panned, Ms. Bennett pointed to a white spot—"See how they nicked the liver a little bit"—and then to a dark fluid. "Now, when I first saw that, I thought it was blood. But it's just bile."

Heads nodded in the audience. "Oh, just bile." A couple of people munched on potato chips. Most of the viewers were on the edges of their seats as the climax approached.

"O.K., Karen," Dr. Sherwood said, "as you can see, the gallbladder is almost off. And there it is, all off. . . . You can see I have the gallbladder now, Karen, and we're going to start to take it out."

The gallbladder exit was accompanied by a whooshing sound as it was sucked off the screen and up a tube. Then came a climactic bit of cinematography: the abdomen rapidly receding from view as the camera pulled out of the body and then panned across the operating table to the gallbladder sitting on a white cloth.

"O.K., Karen, as you can see, here is the gallbladder," Dr. Sherwood said. "We're going to open the gallbladder for you and show you the inside. And there it is."

Everyone applauded. "The human body is so wonderful," said Donna Russell as the video ended. She and the others gave it a thumbs-up rating.

[July 1, 1991]

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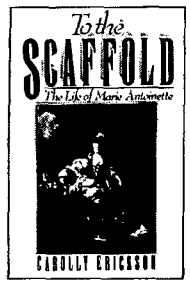

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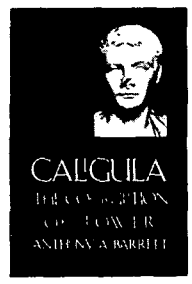

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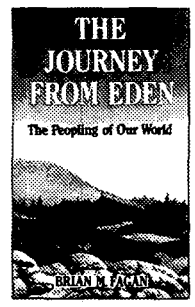

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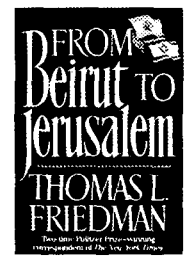

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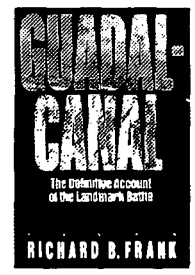

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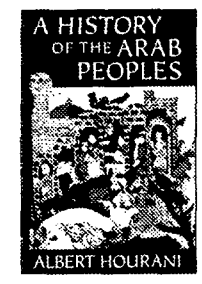

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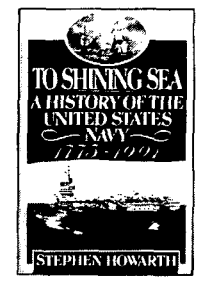

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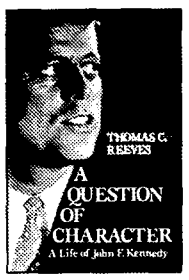

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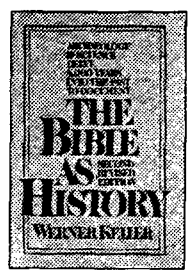

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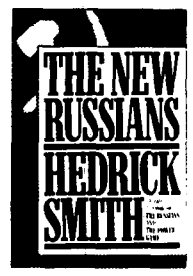

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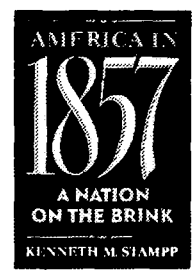

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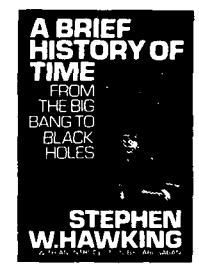

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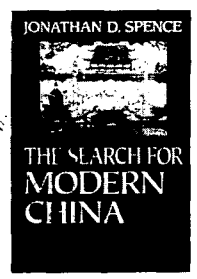

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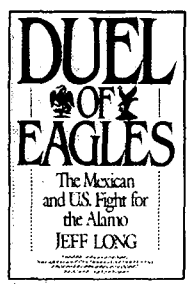

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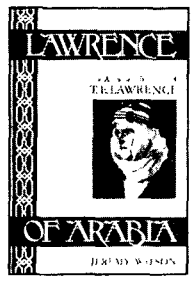

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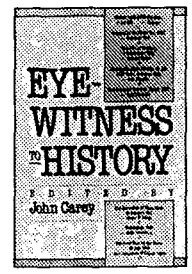

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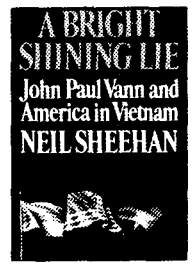

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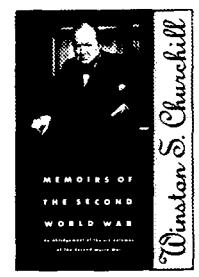

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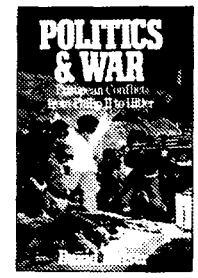

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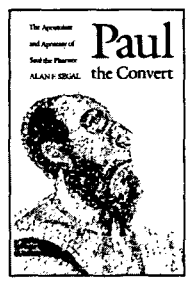

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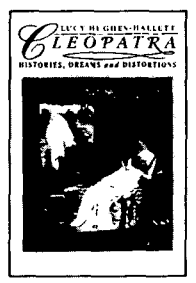

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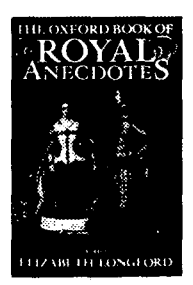

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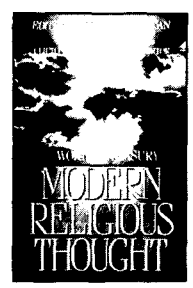

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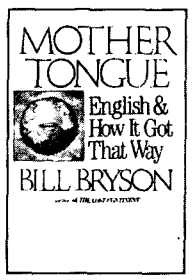

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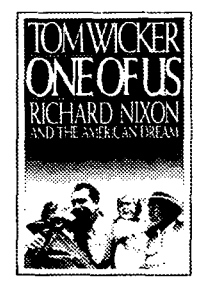

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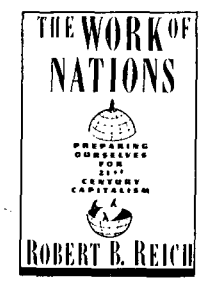

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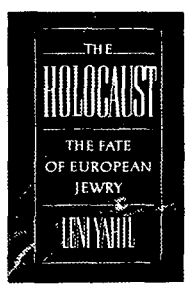

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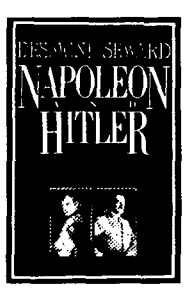

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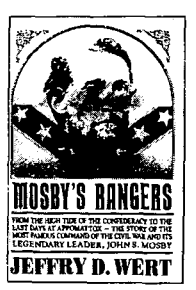

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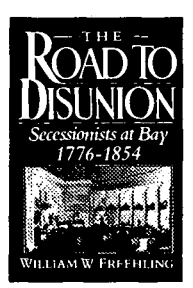

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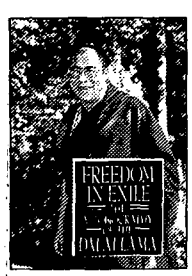

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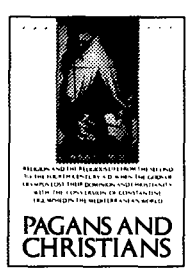

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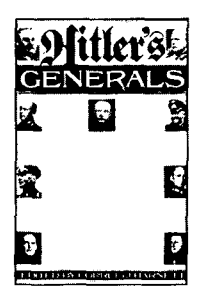

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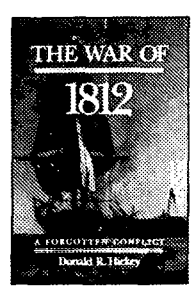

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